THE Nation

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The Shape of Things

WHAT ARE THE AMERICANS UP TO IN PARIS? When the British-Chinese resolution was introduced, ordering the Israel government to withdraw its Negev forces to positions held before the Egyptian attack and threatening sanctions under Article 41 if it refused, the United States delegation supported the move. Only President Truman's last-minute order prevented the resolution from going through in its original form. But his influence was short-lived. Within a week, while the President was involved in the post-election excitement, a new maneuver was launched. The American delegation introduced amendments to the British-Chinese resolution which transferred responsibility for compliance from the Security Council to Acting Mediator Bunche and referred the issue of enforcement to Chapter 7 instead of Article 41 of the Charter. Since Article 41 is a part of Chapter 7, the difference was hard to detect. The New York press revealed utter confusion, reporting the American move under contrary headlines: "U.N. Council for Sanctions Against Israel," said the *Herald Tribune;* "U.S. Seeks Ban on Zion Sanctions," said the *Journal-American.* The fact of the matter is that the Americans again attempted to circumvent Mr. Truman's wishes without appearing to do so. The resolution as amended and passed still makes Israel subject to sanctions if it fails to withdraw to the former positions, but leaves actual penalties to a subcommittee acting under the broader terms of Chapter 7. Confusion has been further confounded by the statement of General William E. Riley, Truce Supervision Chief of Staff in Palestine. The American Marine officer arrived in Paris after the resolution had been passed and told Arab leaders there that the truce was dead and the Israelis victorious throughout Palestine. According to some reports, he advised them to make peace as promptly as possible. This eruption obviously blows the resolution sky-high, and exposes the absurdity of the British-American attempt to make the facts fit the antiquated theories of Count Bernadotte. We urge Mr. Truman to make it his business, even during his short stay in Key West, to put a final stop to the American maneuvers in Paris. A settlement should be urged, not on the basis of the truce and the Bernadotte plan, but on the facts as they exist. Maybe General Riley should take over from Mr. Bunche the job of ending the war in Palestine!

ONE PRICELESS BOON OF THE ELECTION WAS the liberation of Americans from the public-opinion polls. Messrs. Gallup, Roper, Crossley, *et al.* had seemed to be playing the role of the soothsayer in the ancient Greek tragedy. When the tragic hero was warned what lay in store for him, his doom was sealed; the more he tried to evade the edict of the gods, the more securely he entangled himself in the coils of necessity. Americans, told that they were certain to elect Mr. Dewey, seemed prepared, with horrible fascination, to choose as their President a man whom few of them liked. But moved by a healthy democratic instinct, many at the last moment upset the prophecy by voting for Mr. Truman instead, while others who never doubted the truth of the prediction falsified it by staying home on Election Day. Mr. Truman himself, forewarned of disaster, triumphantly defied the augurs. Independence, Missouri, does not nourish faith in the inevitable. The polls should not be abolished, but they should be improved to test more accurately the winds of opinion. Yet at best they tell us, not what must become, but what happens to be, and what man's will can change. Can we not now revolt against the Hooper ratings, which poison the radio, and all the other poll-determined inanities which reduce our popular culture to the lowest common denominator of momentary taste? Something better might win a high rating if a determined fight were made for it.

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THOSE WHO NOW ARE RIDICULING THE forecasters should not forget to say a kind word for Louis Bean and his book "How to Predict Elections," published a few months ago. Mr. Bean, who has long been respected in governmental circles for his accurate predictions about crops, weather, votes, and other things, did not—to his credit—say who was going to win but marshaled tests, for others to apply, which made a Truman victory seem far more likely than most of the experts believed. Among other things, he indicated that the hypothetical cycle of national politics had reached its Republican peak and turned downward before this campaign began; the Republicans were climbing in the late thirties and by 1944 had lost their chance to gain power. Even Mr. Bean did not foresee that in a small total vote it would be the supporters of New Deal policies who would go to the polls and the Republican regulars who would go fishing. Nevertheless, if the Chicago *Tribune* had paid attention to him, it would not have come out

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with its banner headline "Dewey Defeats Truman," and other journalistic enterprises might have been saved enormous expense or embarrassment.

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DEMOCRACY DID NOT WORK QUITE SO WELL in the numerous state referendums—once upon a time supposed to be the last word in letting the people say what they wanted. By votes which, as a rule, were much smaller even than the small vote for Presidential electors, a pretty mixed crop of measures was accepted or defeated. Liberals will approve the repeal by Kansas of its sixty-eight-year-old prohibition amendment, but will hardly welcome the decision by Massachusetts not to upset the old law preventing qualified physicians from offering information on birth control. Six states, under pressure of the American Legion, voted for soldiers' bonuses, while four rejected them. New Jersey refused to sanction a bond issue for enlarging and renovating its overcrowded hospitals and educational institutions. Organized labor in Massachusetts and New Mexico succeeded in killing proposed bans on the closed shop and other state legislation of the Taft-Hartley variety, but in Arizona the voters sanctioned an act which would put teeth into the anti-closed-shop amendment adopted two years ago. This amendment itself, however, is being attacked on constitutional grounds before the United States Supreme Court. If there is any trend in such a confused lot of results, except perhaps in the increased power of the labor vote on questions of union regulation, we cannot distinguish it. Pressure groups, good or bad as you see it, count more than anything else in most referendums.

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JUST BEFORE THE ELECTION, J. PARNELL Thomas "insisted" on appearing before the federal grand jury investigating charges that he had received salary kickbacks from "employees" who never worked for him. Pleading for a nonpolitical hearing, Mr. Thomas said he would testify on November 4. The election came and went. Mr. Thomas returned to Washington, entered the grand-jury chamber, and emerged five minutes later with tightly closed lips. The Congressman, his lawyer announced, had refused to make any statement to the grand jury lest he incriminate himself. He thus stood firmly, if somewhat unexpectedly, on his constitutional rights—the very rights he had so vehemently tried to deny to many witnesses before his Un-American Activities Committee. Sobered by the defeat of two of his Republican colleagues on the committee, John McDowell of Pennsylvania and Richard B. Vail of Illinois, Mr. Thomas is still, unfortunately, clinging to his seat, *sans* the committee chairmanship, in the Eighty-first Congress. But he may well lose even this, and more, now that the grand jury has returned an indictment against him.

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SINCE THE TYPICAL INVESTOR IS A TIMID and impulsive Republican, it is not surprising that stock prices crashed the morning after the election, or that an unconvincing recovery the next day was followed by more heavy selling on November 5. In Wall Street as elsewhere, a Dewey victory had been taken for granted and had undoubtedly been one reason for a modest upward movement in stock averages during recent weeks. That made the market all the more vulnerable to the shock provided by the polls. But even if Dewey had proved the people's choice, the market might well have turned downward, for professional traders generally tend to take profits as soon as the good news is out. Moreover, some of the shrewder operators, as the *Wall Street Journal* has noted, believed that a Dewey Administration, pursuing "sound" economic policies, would not merely have checked inflation but precipitated deflation. Disregarding such considerations, most investors are now readjusting their sights to the prospects of a repeal of the Taft-Hartley act, increasing bargaining power for labor, and greater taxation of profits. But while these prospects are upsetting—to business men—it does not follow that their realization would be bad for business. Actually, the chief present threat to our prosperity arises from the fact that capital's share in the national product has been expanding while that of the mass of consumers has been shrinking. From its piled-up profits, business has been rapidly enlarging productive capacity and moving toward the 1929 position, when it found itself generating too little income to purchase all it had to sell. If the election does have some of the results investors fear, the upshot may be a helpful correction of this disequilibrium. In that event, bets on a Truman slump may pay off as badly as bets on a Republican triumph.

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AS THE CHINESE COMMUNISTS COMPLETED their conquest of Manchuria and threatened North China, apparently being poised to drive toward the Yangtze River, the United States government advised Americans to leave the Nanking and Shanghai areas south of that river. Apparently, nothing can now save the government of Chiang Kai-shek, dependent as it is, not on the loyalty of the Chinese people, but on corrupt and intriguing politicians and generals. The Cabinet was so weak that a broadcast announcing President Truman's reelection caused it to resign—though some other excuse would have been found if this had been lacking. Anyone who has read General Stilwell's memoirs must have been prepared for what has happened. The government could not or would not fight effectively; it could not control disastrous inflation because it would neither curb the expenditures of its hangers-on nor tax them. All it could do was to press for more and more money, arms, and supplies from the United States, but when they got there they were as good as wasted. American power might help sustain a determined and self-reliant regime; all the people in the world could not strengthen the Kuomingtang, so long as it failed to carry out the reforms urged by a long list of American advisers, including General Marshall. Pretended compliance was of no use. No greater damage to the cause of Nationalist China could have been caused than the additional aid voted—despite the advice of the State Department—by the Eightieth Congress, since this absolved Chiang Kai-shek's regime of the need to clean its own house in order to qualify for assistance.

Mr. Truman on His Own

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

HARRY TRUMAN, we may hope, will be himself from now on. He will neither be the small man unhappily wearing the clothes of his tall predecessor nor the man who tried to escape this role by surrounding himself with soldiers and bankers wrapped in that air of authority he never could convincingly assume. Apart from a few faithful henchmen, Mr. Truman's best active support came from quarters where he had been regarded with sour distaste before the convention: from a number of old New Dealers, several of whom he had purged in the course of his escape from the shadow of F. D. R.; from organized labor, which would gladly have traded him in for Douglas or Eisenhower at Philadelphia. In the course of the campaign, he turned back to these groups, promising a 1948-model New Deal and threatening the country with depression, war, and fascism if it chose his opponent. They worked hard to put him in and give him a Congress that would enact the program he was running on. He owes his election to labor and its liberal allies, but it was his own pugnacious, stout-hearted campaign that converted their effort from an anti-Dewey to a pro-Truman one. So now he will be his own man, doing pretty much as he pleases. Since this is the case, it becomes important to inquire who is this man to whom the President owes his sole allegiance; in other words, who is Harry Truman?

My own guess is that the President, as a free man, will revert to his old Senatorial self—in perhaps somewhat larger dimensions. This would be a welcome change. It would insure an effective program of domestic reform and enough energy to fight for it against the expected Republican-Dixiecrat opposition. One has only to look back at his war-time record to gain reassurance on this point. As Senator, Mr. Truman not only did a good job of exposing the profiteering tactics of big industry; he also took a strong stand against Administration policies designed to keep the war safely within the confines of established and profitable business practices. A few

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lines from Bruce Catton's excellent case history of the War Production Board, "The War Lords of Washington," are worth recalling in this connection. Senator Truman believed that the lag in war production was largely the fault of the dollar-a-year man in the agencies, and when Donald Nelson became head of the WPB, the Truman committee recommended that they be either cleared out or retained on merit at regular government salaries like anyone else. When Mr. Nelson objected and gave his reasons, Senator Truman yielded, but only in the interest of maintaining the authority of the new chief; he did not like it. He wrote Nelson:

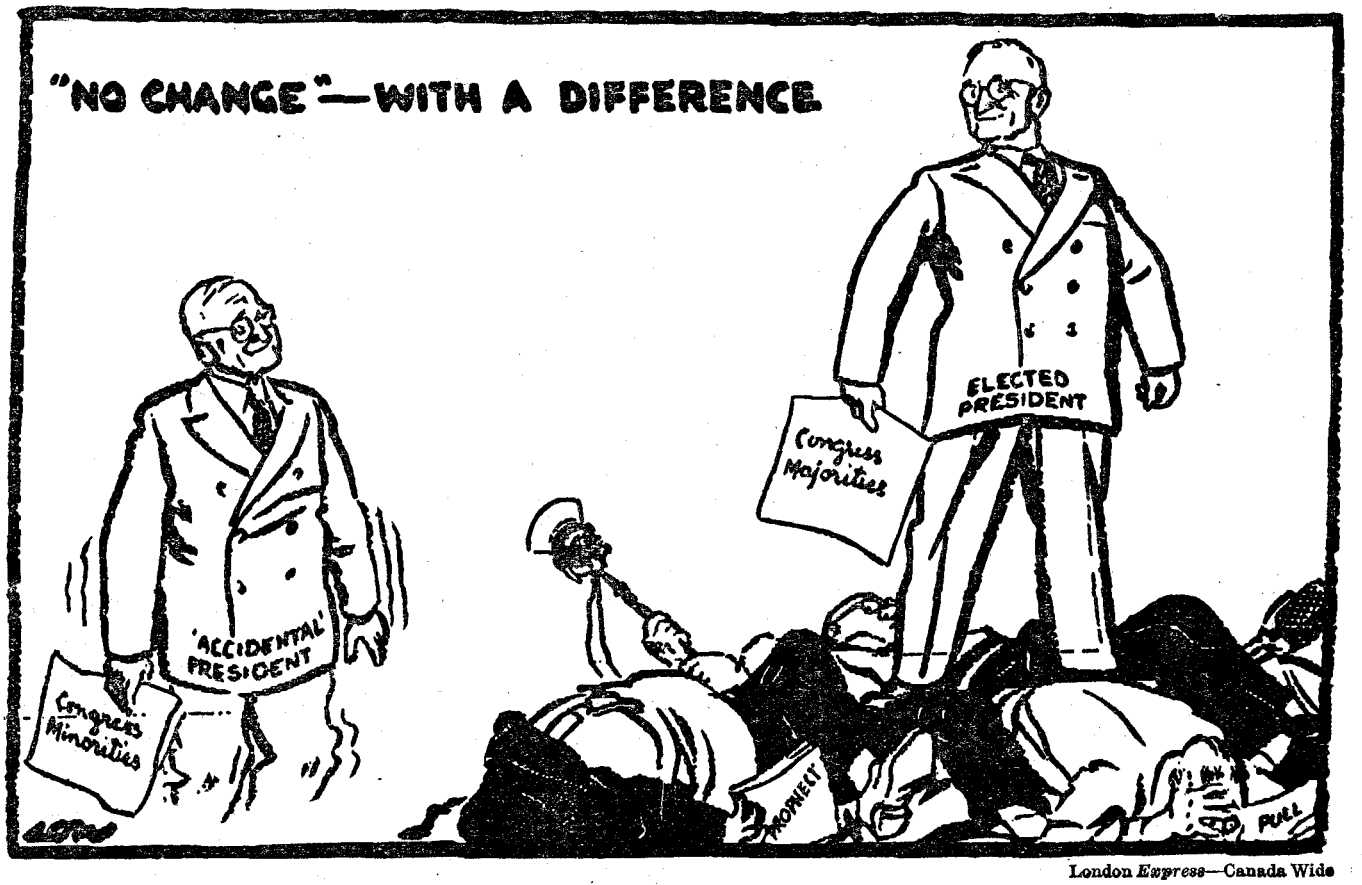
> The committee believed that the problem of substituting the right men for the wrong men was so great that the practice of retaining dollar-a-year men should be abandoned, so that those who were more interested in their remuneration than in their public service would automatically be eliminated, and those public-spirited individuals, like yourself, would be retained. You have informed the committee that you desire to retain some dollar-a-year men who, by reason of the standard of living to which they have accustomed themselves, cannot afford even temporarily to work for the government for $10,000 a year, or less. The committee does not like to have procurement matters intrusted to men who have given such hostages to fortune. Those who cannot forgo large incomes temporarily cannot reasonably be expected to take a chance of forgoing them permanently by taking positions on behalf of the government with which the controlling officials of their corporations are not in sympathy.

There was more of the same, and it revealed a man who was willing to risk the good-will of big business, if necessary, to put war production on an all-out basis. If Mr. Truman will now review some of his own latter-day appointments with the eyes of the former Senator from Missouri, changes are certain, for the dollar-a-year psychology dominates key departments in his Administration.

IT IS in the area of foreign policy that this psychology is more evident, and it is there that Mr. Truman faces his severest test. Persons close to the President believe he recognizes the need of a new attitude in foreign affairs. The Vinson proposal was a fluke not because it ran counter to national feeling or was intrinsically foolish but because it was put forward in a way that appeared to bypass the United Nations, Europe's top foreign-policy makers, and the State Department. The idea itself won a warm popular response.

The President stressed more than once his determination to try to find ways to end the cold war. The small dimensions of Henry Wallace's vote are no measure of America's desire for a settlement, if one can be reached, with Russia. Wallace struck the wrong note by blaming the whole impasse on American policy. But Truman knew that the voters, while accepting the Administration's general view of Russia and communism, would none the less welcome a sign that we were ready to talk rather than force a showdown.

But a gesture is not a policy. If peace is to rest on any-



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thing besides arms and dollars, Mr. Truman will have to initiate a thorough job of reorientation. Until now, he has been so completely subject to pressure exercised by his "dollar-a-year" advisers that he could not act with clarity and decision even in a matter he knows as much about as the situation in Palestine. The sorry failure of the Truman Doctrine in Greece and the collapse of American-supported Nationalist power in China demonstrate the inadequacy of an anti-Russian policy which ignores the very meaning of the Communist threat.

What has become clear to democrats everywhere outside the United States is that neither financial nor military "aid" will be effective unless it is linked with thoroughgoing reform. And this means, in Greece for example, not only the cleaning out of grafters or the institution of a decent tax policy. In fact, these worthy changes will themselves prove fictitious as long as the financial crowd in power is permitted to maintain—with American funds—an economic structure that is unsound and unjust from top to bottom. In plain words, Greece needs a revolution, and if it does not get one under American, and thus presumably democratic, auspices, it will either succumb to outright fascist dictatorship or accept whatever the Communists have in preparation. The same can be said of China. In Western Europe, the theory of "recovery" unaccompanied by lower prices and a decent standard of living is being exploded daily by strikes which further undermine the effectiveness of the Marshall Plan. As for the War Department idea that military security may soon necessitate an alliance with Franco, it has already occasioned violent retorts from the Labor press in Britain and the Socialist powers in France.

UP TO now, Mr. Truman has unquestioningly accepted the principle that foreign policy to be strong must be bipartisan, but in practice this has meant reducing it to a denominator common to a handful of conservatives in both camps. As a result, we have been energetic in planning rearmament and encouraging movements toward union in Western Europe. We have provided financial help and, in some quarters, arms. We have intervened to get reds out of office and to stabilize existing right or centrist regimes. All these actions could win support in both parties, alienating only the far left and the isolationist right. The result has been what we see: growing tension with the East and growing suspicion among democrats, both East and West.

It is time for American labor and liberal opinion to concentrate on the problem of creating a "New Deal" in foreign policy, whether or not it wins the backing of the Republican right wing. To get rid of the Taft-Hartley law will be worth little if our policy abroad is dominated by Taft-Hartley ideology and interests. Mr. Truman will need all the advice and help he can get if he is to reform the program of his State and Defense departments. The task requires, first, the courage to get rid of the men now in charge; second, an honest admission of the failure of our political strategy abroad; third, the creation of new plans aimed at backing rather than preventing necessary social change in Europe and Asia. This is a large order, but it will have to be filled if Mr. Truman hopes to check the spread of communism and by this means to prevent war. It will have to be filled if Mr. Truman intends to be President in his own right.

THE CARTOON on the cover by Bernard Seaman was drawn especially for Frontpage, *the monthly magazine of the New York Newspaper Guild, and appeared in the November issue of that journal, which was distributed to guildsmen about ten days before the election. We are indebted to the editors of* Frontpage *for allowing us to reproduce it. The cartoon by David Low on the opposite page was drawn in Britain just after the election and transmitted to Canada by radio. It had to be slightly retouched.*—EDITORS THE NATION

How Rich the Farmers?

FARMERS, it is generally believed, have been the chief beneficiaries of war prosperity and post-war inflation. Certainly, in last week's astounding election, it was the fear of being deprived of certain of these benefits by a Republican Administration that swung the farm vote to President Truman in the Middle Western states. Apologists are now saying that it should have been recognized earlier that the farmers had become prosperous during and since the war, that they had a vested interest in a Democratic victory. But is this true? The Department of Agriculture has gathered the relevant facts. What actually has happened?

A balance sheet for American agriculture as a whole seems to confirm the popular impression. The farmers' assets have risen from $54 billion in 1940 to $122 billion in 1948, while their liabilities have shrunk from $10 billion to $9 billion. As a result, their equities have shot up from $44 billion to $113 billion—nearly a threefold increase.

Closer examination, however, shows that much of this gain consists only of figures on the books and not of changes in the real wealth of farm families. Nearly $30 billion of the increase represents higher valuation of farm land, which always rises—and falls—with prices of crops. Most farmers do not sell out at the top of the market, as do stock speculators, but live on their land and work it. Another $15 billion is in livestock and stored crops—inventory items subject to the hazards of price changes.

A better test is a balance sheet which values physical assets for both years at 1940 prices. It shows a net gain during the eight years of $20 billion. This is a large

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figure, but still represents a growth in net wealth of somewhat less than 50 per cent for the period, while the national product as a whole was gaining at about the same rate.

In what did this gain consist? About $1.1 billion represents additional farm machinery and automobiles, and a slightly larger amount was put into new household equipment. The farmer and his family are better equipped for their jobs and live a little more comfortably. Most striking is the fact that the farmers themselves, anticipating post-war deflation, have prepared for it by laying aside money and paying off mortgages. Their bank deposits and currency have grown from $4 billion to $16 billion. In addition, they have increased their holdings in United States savings bonds by $4.5 billion. At the same time, they have decreased their mortgage debt from $6.6 billion to $4.9 billion. This development is in striking contrast to the action of farmers in the boom after World War I, when they sank their profits in additional land, often borrowing money to do so.

Farmers have been living better; there is no doubt about it. Even after paying their higher income taxes, and in spite of the high prices of what they must buy, their net incomes in 1947 would obtain 1.7 times as much family maintenance as in 1940. In other words, their average gain in purchasing power as a result of the war is about 70 per cent, compared with an average for everybody of about 50 per cent. A fall in farm prices greater than a drop in industrial prices or wages would bring them back again toward the general average. But were farmers getting a fair share of the national income before the war? Do we want to go back again to the long agricultural depression of the 1920's and 1930's? Crop prices must and will drop somewhat, but let us not be too savage in demanding agricultural deflation.

In 1944, only one-eighth of the farms produced crops worth $6,000 or more at market prices. Two-thirds of the farms turned out products worth less than $2,500. One-sixth of them produced less than $600. These figures include what was used by the household itself. There are a few rich farmers, but most farm families, like the rest of us, are trying to get along as well as they can on incomes well within the range of modesty. It is a good thing that they are as well prepared as they are for possible future misfortune.

CORRECTION: In *The Nation* of October 25, Milton Edelman wrote, "Of the 104 international unions in the A. F. of L., two—the Bakery Workers and the Hotel and Restaurant Employees—have expressed sympathy for Wallace." We have since learned that only a handful of the *locals* in the Bakery Workers' union declared for Mr. Wallace, and we apologize to the union membership at large, and its leadership, for the generalization.

A Victory for Peace

BY J. ALVAREZ DEL VAYO

Paris, November 5

IT WAS a dramatic moment at the United Nations when news came that Dewey had conceded the election to President Truman. Everywhere in the corridors one heard the comment: "This means peace." Last week most of the papers here carried reports from their correspondents in New York and Washington that little excitement prevailed in the United States over the elections. In Europe, however, people waited as tensely for the returns as if the election were taking place in their own country. The issue of war or peace is far more real and immediate on this side of the Atlantic.

It is no doubt unfair to apply to Dewey the phrase coined in the twenties, "Poincaré, c'est la guerre"; yet editorial comment yesterday almost unanimously attributed Truman's victory to the fact that in the minds of the American people the election of Dewey meant war. Of course the Communist and pro-Communist papers stressed this aspect particularly; according to them the factors which finally swung the vote to Truman were his proposal to send Vinson to Moscow and his last-minute speeches on foreign policy, which echoed, "obviously for campaign purposes," many of Wallace's ideas. The same factors, the Communist press explains, account for Wallace's poor showing. But even the liberal and moderate papers interpret the results as an indication that the American people oppose any new experiment which might lead to a world conflict. (It is true that earlier this year the Gallup poll found that the majority of Americans favored the get-tough-with-Russia policy. But after Tuesday's upset people here are skeptical about Gallup's opinions; already *chansonniers* in cabarets like Les Deux Anes and Le Lapin Agile are composing satiric quatrains on poll-takers.) For Europeans, considerations of foreign policy were mainly at stake on November 2, but they are aware, too, that Truman's fighting speeches on domestic issues—the cost of living, the Taft-Hartley act, Negro rights, and so on—had a great deal to do with his victory.

The effect of Truman's election on European politics is a subject of much speculation at the Palais de Chaillot. Most observers point out that now there will be no break in the continuity of American foreign policy. Had Dewey won, policy decisions would have been practically suspended until his inauguration, even though there are a number of immediate problems which can scarcely wait until January for a solution. Review of American policy in previous election years, however, leads some people to question whether the reelection of the incumbent President is any guaranty of continuity. Guaranty, no; but at least it makes continuity possible.

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The development of American relations with Russia is the subject of much conjecture, and rumors are current of a second Vinson mission—which will really get to Moscow. I believe, as I have often said, that the United States can iron out its difficulties with the Soviet Union. I doubt, however, that even on the basis of the election results the Russians will take the initiative in any such attempt. Soviet press comment on the Truman victory has thus far been noncommittal, though isolated comments from Prague and Budapest and a statement of Communist leader Wilhelm Pieck in the Soviet zone of Germany sound an evident note of satisfaction. The Russians consider their position in Berlin and eastern Germany very strong, and I do not think they would jump in with a proposal for negotiation that might give the impression they were looking for a way out of a desperate situation. Still, it seems safe to predict that the tension in American-Russian relations will gradually ease.

At the moment the word "prediction" is anathema to French journalists. After the beating their American colleagues took on Tuesday, they refuse even to venture an opinion on the outcome of the elections to the Conseil de la République which will take place this Sunday.

America Was Promises

THE President's efforts had not been altogether wasted. . . . But when he damned the Eightieth Congress and the Taft-Hartley law, nobody seemed really to care or listen. . . . Harry Truman's sarcastic reply that the Republicans just kept saying, "I can do it better," had boomeranged. The people thought the Republicans probably could do it better.—*Time,* November 1.

What will Dewey do? Find out in the November issue of *Kiplinger Magazine,* just off the press. Here the Kiplinger organization, nationally famous for its twenty-five years of reporting the news of Washington, gives you its accurate, down-to-earth analysis and forecast of what to expect from the new Administration. It will help you dispel the campaign fog.—Advertisement in *Time,* November 8.

What Dewey Will Do, Thirty-two Page Feature Complete in This Issue. [The introductory article explains] Why you need to know what Dewey will do. You've got to live with him for four years, possibly eight. He will influence your life, your living, your thinking, your work, your business.—*Kiplinger Magazine,* November.

Between election and inauguration day—with a Dewey victory—an Administration that stands defeated and on the way out of office will continue to run the country. . . . Mr. Truman in the seventy-eight days between election and inauguration day will function as President, making decisions, shaping policies, filling jobs that all may be undone after January 20.—*U. S. News–World Report,* November 5.

This year the Presidential race can be taken for granted. . . . As we view this campaign from a detached position, we all know that the trend is conservative. . . . My guess is that there will be a dozen or so more Republicans in the new Congress.—Raymond Moley in *Newsweek,* November 1.

Dewey is in, of course. . . . Operation Takeover—the Dewey Team's preparation for picking up the reins of the national government—will headquarter in Albany. Dewey himself plans to remain as Governor of New York until shortly before inauguration day.—*Business Week,* October 30.

The one outcome of the November election about which any serious doubt is expressed by objective-minded persons is the political complexion of the new Senate.—Mark Sullivan in the New York *Herald Tribune,* October 1.

The U. S. was about to ditch Truman and take Dewey for reasons that involved the brain as well as the emotions. And the next President would find his ideas in tune with those of a great majority of his people.—*Life* news story, November 1.

Today it is unthinkable that in any national election a modern polling organization could make an error as great as that registered by the *Literary Digest* in 1936 (19 per cent); for that matter, it is highly improbable that an error *half* as great as that of the *Literary Digest* could be made by modern polling procedures. This is true because modern polls pay great attention to the selection of the cross-section. Returns are carefully checked to discover the extent to which they are unrepresentative. Moreover, polling organizations are aware of the great importance of the time factor and for this reason usually insist upon polling almost up to the day of election.—George Gallup in "A Guide to Public Opinion Polls" (1948).

The first post-election question is how the government can get through the next ten weeks. . . . Events will not wait patiently until Thomas E. Dewey officially replaces Harry S. Truman.—Joseph and Stewart Alsop, in many newspapers, November 3.

How long will the Ice Age last? As realists, we must recognize that Dewey will probably be elected.—Max Lerner in the New York *Star,* October 17.

Dewey is sure to be elected. I predict he will be a first-rate President.—Drew Pearson, in many newspapers, October 14.

This writer gave Dewey 61 more electoral votes than the [*Newsweek*] poll average of 376, Thurmond 3 more, and Truman 64 less. We guessed the Republicans will get 54 Senators in the next Congress as against the poll average of 50. The poll average sets the new House at 256 Republicans, 177 Democrats, 2 independents. Our guess was 265 Republicans, 160 Democrats, 3 independents. —John O'Donnell, the New York *Daily News,* October 7.

Dewey is going to be the next President and you might as well get used to him.—T. R. B. in the *New Republic,* October 25.

The G. O. P. victory in 1946 reduced the riddle of 1948 pretty largely to "How much?" rather than "By whom?"

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. . . Harry Truman deserves well of the nation. He was not a great President, though he may some day, not far off, become a great Senator.—T. R. B. in the *New Republic*, November 8.

Don't count Truman out. . . . Get rid of the idea that the 1948 election is wrapped up and ready for delivery to Governor Dewey. . . . In Mr. Bean's very capable opinion [Louis H. Bean, statistician, political prophet, and author of "How to Predict Elections"], the Republican tide set in some twelve years ago and has already run out. . . . The odds are still on Dewey, but I predict we will hear less and less about his election by default.—Robert Bendiner in *The Nation*, September 11.

I rashly predict as follows: Out of an estimated total vote of 55,000,000, Dewey should poll 27,500,000; Truman, 23,500,000; Wallace, 2,250,000; Thurmond, 1,250,000; Thomas, 400,000; scattered, 100,000.—Robert Bendiner in *The Nation*, October 30.

DEWEY DEFEATS TRUMAN.—Chicago *Daily Tribune*, November 3.

POLITICS AND PEOPLE

Two and Two Make Four

BY ROBERT BENDINER

NOW that the spell has been broken, we can all marvel at our strange behavior while it lasted. It seems incredible that millions of us should have taken it for granted that while our fellow-Americans liked Harry Truman, even if they gasped at his blunders, they would grudgingly troop to the polls and vote for Thomas E. Dewey, whom they neither liked nor trusted; that they favored Truman's policies—even the Roper polls showed that they did—but would, under some strange compulsion, cast their ballots for his opponent. The causes of this national trance will doubtless be probed in detail for many months to come by experts in the field of mass psychology, and I have neither the desire nor the qualifications to poach on their preserve. They may report some national phenomenon like the tulip mania that ravaged Holland in the seventeenth century—and then again, they may find that there was no trance at all, that the Democrats simply got out a higher percentage of their potential vote than the Republicans.

What seems of far greater importance is that a majority of those who cared enough to go to the polls flouted the prophets, ignored what they read in 90 per cent of the press, disowned the Eightieth Congress, and blew life into the corpse of the New Deal. Scorning the appeal of the Communist-tainted Progressives on the one side and the backward-looking Republicans on the other, they marked out for this country the path of what Europeans call the Third Force. In setting this course against the most overwhelming odds, they gave a tired and cynical world a demonstration of how much democratic vitality is still to be found in this maligned "plutocracy" of ours. Some 23,000,000 voters won a major battle for the democracies in the cold war, and Mr. Vishinsky understandably found the results "amazing."

What chills the blood is the fact that but for a fluke in the election laws of one state and a handful of votes in another, we might have had a disaster instead of a triumph—and I am not thinking primarily of a Dewey victory. Truman could not have won without taking either Ohio or Illinois. He took the first by less than 20,000 votes owing to the 35,000 siphoned off by Henry Wallace. And had Illinois not ruled the Progressives off the ballot for failing to obtain a fixed number of signatures in each county, the Wallace vote would have been twice enough to give that state, too, to Dewey. Had the Progressive Party succeeded in its purpose in Ohio and Illinois alone, the election would have been thrown into the House of Representatives. With each state in that body limited to a single vote, the Southern minority, holding the balance of power, would have been in a perfect position to carry out the avowed strategy of the Dixiecrats—to compel Mr. Truman to drop his civil-rights program for good or be turned out of office. What the United States would have looked like to the rest of the world in that event, and what Soviet propagandists could have done with the picture, is a nightmare we have happily been spared. The same Mr. Wallace who came within a hair of making it a reality now claims credit for having "stopped fascism and turned the tide" on the ground that he successfully drove Truman to the left. Had he satisfied himself on this score a day or two before the election—and withdrawn—instead of discovering it the day after, he might conceivably have made out a case. As it is, his victory statement must be set beside his claims to have "stopped the cold war" the week before and to have saved the state of Israel the week before that.

MR. DEWEY takes with him from American politics two myths that have long been due for the discard. One is the flat dictum that a large vote is sure fire for the Democrats, while a small turnout is made to order for the Republicans. The total vote last week was

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shockingly low, proportionally among the lowest in the country's history; yet it gave the Democrats the triumph of the century. The fact is that whether the vote is large or small, everything depends on which side gets it out.

Dr. Gallup, in whose discomfiture practically no one but Harry Truman is in a position to take comfort, proposes now to find out just who it was that stayed home on Election Day. This seems to me both a useful public service and a risky venture for the disconcerted poll-taker. If he finds that the majority of them were Democrats who would have voted for Truman had they turned out, then his polls will look even worse than they do now. On the other hand, if the bulk of the stay-at-homes turn out to be Republicans, too certain of the outcome to bother to vote, then Dr. Gallup and his fellow-samplers must bear much of the burden of Dewey's defeat by having promoted that certainty.

Should the second of these two possibilities turn out to be the case, assuming the matter is susceptible of proof, Dewey can take some comfort in the knowledge that a fuller vote would have elected him. But even that circumstance would scarcely have altered the revelation of a country sold once and for all on the policies of Franklin Roosevelt. The astonishing vote for House and Senate must have burned that fact into the minds of every politician in America.

IT IS not too much to say that the Republicans lost the election of 1948 when they took possession of Capitol Hill two years ago. Surely no group of men ever more grossly misread the public mind. Wishfully interpreting a post-war weariness—perhaps even a desire for a pause—as a mandate to rip the heart out of the New Deal, the Eightieth Congress fell to with a meat-ax. Lobbyists—oil, real-estate, cattle, and utilities—swarmed into Washington and enjoyed a field day such as they had not experienced since Hugo Black, as a Senator, had laid the whip to them in the early days of the New Deal. Controls went by the board, taxes were revised to the advantage of the rich, and for housing, reclamation, and social services of all sorts there was just one approach—slash to the bone. A vindictiveness, pent up for fourteen years, marked the approach to labor. And investigating committees, swollen with arrogance, blithely overrode the constitutional rights of their victims, condemned people without a hearing, and used their Congressional immunity as a cover for slander and libel.

What was even more of a shock to the country than the recklessness of policy in the Eightieth Congress was its unbelievable inefficiency. As *The Nation* pointed out editorially in the scandalous week of adjournment:

> After filling volumes of the *Record* with Communist-baiting, tears for the taxpayer, and pleas for the protection of American cows against oleomargarine, they set a date for adjournment without having acted on a dozen of the fifteen most important bills before them and without having put up the money for much of the legislation they did pass. In consequence, the most far-reaching laws of the session had to be shot through both houses in a disgraceful two weeks' whirl, with all pretense to deliberation giving way to shabby trades and crude bargaining.

And then this magazine warned prophetically, "Unfortunately for the G. O. P., the Eightieth Congress will be remembered. If it was not, as President Truman says, the worst in our history, it was surely bad enough to be the Number One issue of the 1948 elections."

President Truman, to his credit, recognized a Number One issue when he saw it, and from the start he hammered away at "that good-for-nothing Eightieth Congress." Here the death of the second myth must be recorded—that Presidential campaigns have little effect on the voters, that they are an anachronism with which the country can readily dispense. Unquestionably both Wallace and Dewey lost votes as the campaign proceeded—Wallace because of the growing identification of his cause with that of the Communists, plus his own extravagant claims; Dewey because of his glaring determination to evade issues and his smug assumption that victory was assured. Truman, in contrast, fought like a tiger. And he had a good case.

His own success is less important than the service he rendered. Whatever the genuineness of his political philosophy—and it has been questioned on all sides—the fact remains that he appealed to the country from the left, and the country responded to an extent no one had thought possible. The result is that the political climate has changed overnight. The Martin-Halleck-Taber leadership of the House has been repudiated so violently that prominent Republicans are tumbling over one another to disown it. Two of the leading lights of the Un-American Affairs Committee and scores of supporters of the Taft-Hartley act have been voted out of office. Such gems of reaction as Representatives Knutson, Busbey, McDowell, Gearhart, Schwabe, and Kersten have been retired to private life along with such highly expendable Senators as Brooks, Revercomb, Dworshak, Ball, Robertson, and Buck. And suddenly the allegedly bankrupt Democratic Party finds itself with an array of official talent unmatched since the first fine flush of the New Deal. The Senate will be a different body with men like Kefauver, Humphrey, Douglas, Anderson, Neely, Hunt, and Kerr. Spotted throughout the country are young Democratic governors who promise much for the future—among them Chester Bowles in Connecticut, Adlai Stevenson in Illinois, and G. Mennen Williams in Michigan. And the House, with its astonishing Democratic majority of ninety-two seats,

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will be a far cry from its Martin-dominated predecessor. Belatedly but revealingly Representative Hugh D. Scott, Republican national chairman, is urging his colleagues to support "progressive legislation."

THERE are many more aspects of the election of 1948 than I can even touch on here—the farm vote, the public-opinion polls, the remarkable selectivity of voters, the flat failure of the third party, and the scotching of all talk of a fourth. More important still is the emergence of a Democratic Party that has shed alike its bourbon adherents in the South and its Communist-fringe supporters in the North and yet won an election, a party that depended on labor and independent liberals to get out its vote in the big cities while the machine bosses sat on their hands. A country with its mind fixed on "President" Tom Dewey will require some time to reorient. I know I will. In the meantime we can all take pleasure in the happy reassurance that two and two still make four.

Reaction Still Threatens

BY THOMAS SANCTON

Washington, November 5

A GREAT human drama such as President Truman's astonishing election must inevitably color the country's "objective" political speculations for some time. Even among the millions who voted against him there are undoubtedly many who were thrilled by his achievement. Yet the fact remains that none of the great national issues like inflation, civil rights, or war and peace were solved or directly affected by the election result alone. The responsibility for solving them has indeed been lifted from the Republican Party and its candidate and thrown back to the Democrats and to the labor and liberal forces which played a decisive part in returning the President to office. To paraphrase a famous Churchillian statement, Thomas E. Dewey will not now become Chief Executive to preside over the dissolution of the American economy, but Harry S. Truman may find himself cast in such a role if he and his party organization are not able to prevent the depression which he and a majority of the American electorate feared might occur under a Republican Administration.

Today many millions of Americans have awakened to the realization that this smiling, modest man, who for three years has been a symbol of amiable and blundering mediocrity, suddenly towers above many echelons of his contemporaries who before last Tuesday had seemed to rank him in intellect, statesmanship, and other qualities by which American leaders are judged. The President has proved beyond dispute that he has been gravely underrated. And his campaign has demonstrated with supreme finality that he possesses unsuspected reserves of courage, energy, and political insight.

It is important, however, that the millions who supported him—and especially the labor and liberal groups who threw in with him after a doubtful and unpleasant interlude—remember that Mr. Truman today is no new political demi-god appearing on the scene but the same individual who succeeded to the Presidency on Roosevelt's death in 1945. And it is important for them to realize that the President has his proved limitations, which also have been given various spectacular demonstrations during the past three years. President Truman did not create out of thin air those millions who voted for him on Election Day. The Democratic majority has existed since 1932 as a roughly organized but vital political force; its potential strength, which has made itself felt in times of great provocation, stems from the era of Andrew Jackson or even earlier. The President's real achievement was to rise, by dint of one of the greatest campaign efforts in American history, to a level of personal worth and dynamism which gave this majority a nucleus around which it could organize. The labor organizations and liberal groups which actually canvassed and got out the winning margin of votes had been required by President Truman to wait through decisive years until he finally realized that, as the heir of Roosevelt and the New Deal, he could not possibly win as a conservative.

Bankers, generals, and Dixiecrats were not among those who worked for Truman or contributed to his victory, but a number of such individuals stand in an excellent position to seize or consolidate positions of power in the party unless Truman now becomes as dynamic and formidable as President and party leader as he was as candidate. And it is precisely through the activities of the men who surround him that the victory at the polls could turn out, eventually, to have been lost, strayed, or stolen.

THIS is what labor and liberals must now work to prevent. Reaction under banners has been defeated for the moment, but reaction under Truman buttons and Cabinet portfolios is still dug in. This is the political enemy to be routed now, and on the basis of the President's own analysis of the election victory—"labor did it"—he is obligated to become a leader in the intra-party

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fight. The vote which fell to him Tuesday was not a vote for democratic appeasement.

There are obvious and aggravated areas where the President's efforts should and quite likely may begin. A general and a banker are his Secretary and Under Secretary of State; a banker is his Secretary for Defense. They do not represent what the people voted for on November 2. It was no secret in the capital that the President got, not support, but ill-concealed opposition from these Cabinet officers.

The capital is alive with conflicting rumors about possible changes in the Cabinet, but the indications are that President Truman himself has not at the moment decided what changes he will finally make. In speculating about them, one must consider Truman's rigid concepts of party regularity and political loyalty. Secretary of the Interior Krug and Secretary of Commerce Sawyer seem to have guessed wrong on the election and tried not to become involved in what they thought was a losing fight. Secretary Marshall, from all signs, actually wants to retire; spokesmen for Forrestal have tried to create a similar impression, but this is not taken seriously. Forrestal too obviously likes the job and the power that goes with it. Secretary of Labor Tobin, Secretary of Agriculture Brannan, and Attorney General Clark all made speeches for the President and are considered safe in their posts and riding high. So also is Postmaster General Donaldson, who as a lifetime postal employee has the unique qualification of knowing something about the job. The rumor mill is uncertain about Marshall's "probable" successor, but the names of Averill Harriman, Dean Acheson, and Sumner Welles are mentioned. Among the President's once prominent advisers, the cagey John R. Steelman also guessed wrong on the election, and perhaps has guessed himself out of a job.

If Krug departs, it is expected that the post inevitably will go to the Under Secretary, Oscar L. Chapman, who next after Truman and Chairman Howard McGrath was the brains and driving force of the barnstorming campaign. Chapman is one of the ablest workers in the New Deal tradition and may be one of the central figures in the era now beginning.

On the train returning to Washington Truman was said to have passed the word to reporters that he was in a forgiving mood, feeling "malice toward none," and planned no reprisal dismissals from his Cabinet. He will have time to reflect upon this, however, in the calmer days ahead, and the value of fair-weather friends will doubtless then be more carefully weighed.

The fight on the Taft-Hartley act, which influential labor backers want replaced with a slightly modified Wagner act, will perhaps top even the civil-rights issue as a center of controversy. The President's efforts can conceivably be blocked in both fields. There is a chance that the incoming Administration's major achievements will be in the fields of social security, housing, and anti-inflation action.

Federal Security Administrator Oscar R. Ewing has ready extensive plans to put before Congress; he has predicted that the President will seek to have a Department of Health, Education, and Social Security added to the Cabinet. Senator Ellender (D., La.) says he will introduce early in the session a bill calling for low-rent public housing, slum clearance, and farm housing. Representative Boggs (D., La.) says he will introduce a public-housing measure the day Congress meets.

IN THE new Congress a large number of vital committee posts will go to Southern reactionaries, whose small and relatively easily controlled electorates return them repeatedly to office, giving them a regional advantage by virtue of the seniority system. These Southerners will once more be in strategic positions to kill civil-rights bills and other liberal legislation, which on the whole they oppose. The rumor-mongers are suggesting that the Southern Congressmen, for the sake of party advantage, will grudgingly agree to some compromise civil-rights legislation. For example, Representative Cox of Georgia, one of the most reactionary members of Congress, has expressed his willingness to consider it. But it is likely that the Eighty-first Congress will see the same monotonous performance—bills trapped in committee, released by petition, passed by the House, and filibustered to death in the Senate. To prevent this President Truman himself must provide the leadership in an effort to change Senate rules.

Some of the key committees and the senior Democratic members—most of them former chairmen—who will take over are as follows: Senate Foreign Relations—Tom Connally of Texas; House Foreign Affairs—Sol Bloom of New York; Senate Appropriations—Kenneth D. McKellar of Tennessee; House Appropriations—Clarence Cannon of Missouri; Senate Finance—Walter F. George of Georgia; House Ways and Means—Robert L. Doughton of North Carolina; Senate Armed Services—Millard E. Tydings of Maryland; House Armed Services—Carl Vinson of Georgia; Senate Banking and Currency—Burnet R. Maybank of South Carolina (predicated on waiver of chairmanship by Senator Wagner of New York, who is ill); House Banking and Currency—Brent Spence of Kentucky; Senate Labor and Public Welfare—Albert D. Thomas of Utah; House Education and Labor—John Lesinski of Michigan; Senate Agriculture and Forestry—Elmer Thomas of Oklahoma; House Agriculture—Harold D. Cooley of North Carolina; Senate Judiciary—Pat McCarran of Nevada; House Judiciary—Emanuel Celler of New York; House Un-American Activities—John S. Wood of Georgia, who may waive in favor of John E. Rankin of Mississippi, as formerly; House Veterans' Affairs—Rankin.

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The Rookeries Racket

BY GEORGE A. BERNSTEIN

ONE of the most vicious by-products of the housing shortage in many American cities is the "rookeries" racket. New York City, with a floating population of hundreds of thousands—out-of towners who have come to the city to work and natives who left during the war and have not been able to find an apartment since their return—presents a particularly favorable field for this racket. Its operators are the "landlords" of run-down brownstone houses, ancient apartment buildings, and dilapidated "residence clubs," which they have divided into as many separate rooming accommodations as the space allows. Sometimes they own, more often they rent, these buildings. They furnish them with shabby, often vermin-infested beds and chairs, supply linen once a week at most, and rent out the rooms at fantastically high daily rates. The tenants are subjected to so many indignities that they stay no longer than they have to, but a rapid turnover is profitable, since the landlords, or their renting agents, frequently receive an "under-the-table" cash bonus each time they rent a room. And the rooms are never unoccupied; no sooner does one tenant leave than another gratefully moves in.

It is of course illegal to demand a bonus—though the victim who pays is so relieved to get a roof over his head that he seldom registers a complaint—but most of these landlords' practices are entirely within the law. The Eightieth Congress, sparing no efforts to keep the real-estate lobbyists happy, saw to that. The Housing Control Act of 1947, which sounded the death knell for real rent control and which President Truman called "a most unsatisfactory law" and finally signed only because it seemed to be better than no law at all, decontrolled a large group of dwellings—namely, all hotel rooms, all accommodations not rented for two years before February 1, 1947, all conversions completed after February 1, 1947, and all newly constructed housing units. In addition, certificates of eviction, which previously had to be obtained from the OPA before a landlord could proceed to evict a tenant, were no longer required, and no penalties were specified for landlords who violated the law. The Housing Expeditor's office, even more inadequately staffed than the OPA had been, took over the function of enforcing what controls were left.

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On June 3, 1947, several weeks before this act became law, the New York City Council met in emergency session and passed Local Law 54, creating a Temporary City Housing Rent Commission and reinstituting rent controls on hotels and other decontrolled dwelling places, but only for tenants who had lived in such accommodations for ninety days prior to July 1, 1947. Two months later the City Council passed Local Laws 66, 67, and 68, which required landlords to obtain certificates of eviction from the city rent commission before taking steps to evict tenants and empowered the commission to prosecute violators of these laws.

THE local laws provide a considerable amount of protection to tenants of legitimate apartment houses and hotel rooms but not to the "rookery" dwellers. The loopholes in them are so numerous that the laws do little to stop unscrupulous landlords from exploiting their hapless victims. In the first place, under Local Law 54 as interpreted by the city rent commission, if "two of the facilities and services of a hotel, such as furniture and linens, are furnished by the landlord, the building is a hotel within the definition" of the law. Secondly, with respect to hotels the local law provides that "the maximum rent payable by any tenant is the rent in effect and being paid by such tenant on June 30, 1947." Thus only persons who have lived in the same hotel quarters since June 30, 1947, and for ninety days before that, are protected. When such a tenant moves out, his room is automatically decontrolled.

In the case of dwelling units unrented for two years before February 1, 1947, the maximum rent, when such a unit is occupied by a new tenant after July 1, 1947, becomes the rent "initially agreed upon between the landlord and the tenant occupying such housing accommodation for the first time." In simple terms, the controlled rent of such a dwelling becomes all that the traffic will bear the first time it is rented after July 1, 1947. Furthermore, under the new laws, both federal and local, a previously unfurnished apartment if made into a furnished one becomes a new unit for which no controls exist. Finally, if apartments of seven rooms or more are occupied by less than one person per living room, eviction proceedings can be brought against the tenants in order to subdivide such apartments into two or more dwelling units, but the tenant of the large apartment must be permitted to occupy one of the subdivisions. The smaller units thus created are completely decontrolled under the law.

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The city rent commission, in a report prepared by Joseph J. Seldin of the commission and published September 17, 1948, points out that whereas in 1940 the vacancy rate in New York City was more than 5 per cent, in January, 1946, more than 260,000 families, and by the end of 1946 more than 360,000, were living doubled up. Today the figure is even larger. According to a survey made in Manhattan last year by the Real Estate Board of New York, not a single vacancy was found in 80,000 apartment-house units checked, and a similar investigation in February, 1948, revealed no change. Obviously, therefore, the demand for any sort of living quarters is enormous, and unscrupulous landlords can exploit the need of homeless persons to a tragic extent.

STATISTICS alone give no idea of the misery that exists. During several visits to the overworked investigations department of the city rent commission I listened to the grievances of some of the victims. Thomas W., a veteran, and his wife, just returned from the hospital, had been renting two rooms on the top floor of a Queens rooming house for $7 a week. One day the landlord asked them to move because, he said, he needed the rooms for his private use. Later investigation brought out that he wanted the rooms so that he could rent them separately. When the couple refused to move, they were subjected to a succession of abuses and annoyances. The furniture was taken away, the doors were removed, their personal belongings were scattered. Finally the landlord changed the lock on their front door and kept them out of the house. On their complaint the landlord was prosecuted by the city rent commission. He was sentenced to five days' imprisonment.

Mr. B., an elderly man who had lived since 1942 at a hotel in the mid-forties famous for its musty lobby and dingy rooms, was told by the manager that his rent was being increased from $60 a month to $3.50 a day. He refused to pay such an increase, but offered to pay an additional $15 a month, a raise of 25 per cent. The manager then became abusive and accused him of immorality, but without ever attempting to prove the charge. For the next few weeks Mr. B.'s maid service became irregular and his towels and sheets were not changed. One evening when he returned from work he discovered that his keyhole had been plugged with wax and that he could not gain entrance to his room. After he had been forced to live with friends for several months, unable to obtain any of his possessions, the court fined the hotel $150 and restored Mr. B. to his room.

James O'D., an unmarried disabled war veteran, had been living in a rooming house on West 103d Street for five years, paying $3.50 a week in advance. At the beginning of a week in August, 1948, he looked for his landlord to pay him but could not find him for several days. Then the landlord informed him that because he was so late in paying, his room had been rented to another person, who had left a deposit, and that the lock on his door had been changed so that he could not enter his room. He was not even allowed to get his clothes. The court ordered that he be allowed to remain as a tenant at the same rent and imposed a suspended sentence on the landlord.

More than 3,600 cases have been handled by the city rent commission during the past year. In many instances, but not all, the landlords were convicted, and penalties were imposed ranging from a $5 fine to ninety days in the workhouse. Sometimes the cases were settled by arbitration; occasionally they were dismissed in court. But most people who live in "rookeries" make no appeal to the commission. Desperately hoping to hold on to their rooms, they accept the abuse and pay the increase or move to another similar place if they are "lucky" enough to find one.

The city rent commission has been successful in plugging the law to the extent of preventing wholesale evictions. In correcting this abuse New York has done far more than most cities. But in the matter of rent increases for dwellings which come under the commission's jurisdiction the tenants have not been so fortunate. Of 357 applications filed by hotels for adjustment of rents paid by 16,000 tenants between July, 1947, and September, 1948, about half were granted. About 80 per cent of the landlords of apartments renting for $100 or less a month were either forbidden to raise the rent or "permitted an increase of 15 per cent or less." The other 20 per cent were permitted greater increases.

Creditable as the commission's work has been, its chairman, Maurice Finkelstein, has some odd theories on what ought to be done about the rent situation in general. In the course of an interview he told me that rents cannot be controlled successfully if everything else is decontrolled, that many landlords are having a difficult time meeting expenses, and that if rent controls were lifted, as he believes they should be, the cost of living would increase so much that our lawmakers would be compelled to do something—what he did not say—to combat inflation.

Housing authorities might point out that until federal, state, and city governments appropriate sufficient funds to build a really substantial number of low- and medium-priced housing units, people will continue to live in substandard homes for which they will pay fantastically high rents. Moreover, until large-scale slum clearance gets under way, slums will always be available for reconversion into rooming houses and "hotels." Until last week, therefore, it looked as if rookeries would be with us for a long time to come. The amazing outcome of the election, however, offers real hope that an effective federal housing bill will be passed in the not too distant future.

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Journey Among Creeds—II

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

THE Cultural Congress for Peace at Wroclaw wound up abruptly once the resolutions were adopted. Some of us heard only after adjournment that among the supplementary, minor resolutions passed in the last moments of the last session was one creating a permanent body, with headquarters at Paris, and designating a committee composed of national representatives. The Americans named were Professor Harlow Shapley, Howard Fast, and Jo Davidson. I will not comment here upon the choice of these particular persons, except to recall my surprise during the congress at the discovery that Howard Fast had suddenly become America's outstanding creative writer. A drop of martyrdom is obviously worth a good many gallons of talent in some cultural circles. What must be said, however, is that even if all three men selected were the best to be found in their fields, their names should not have been put on the slate without consultation with the American delegation. No one was more indignant at this procedure than Jo Davidson, who correctly pointed out that even the delegation was hardly equipped to select persons who would be expected to speak for the whole range of science and the arts in the United States.

One thing is sure. If the American committee remains a small, hand-picked group, the future of the organization in this country will be brief and obscure. The Polish-French committee that called the congress took obvious pains to include many persons of known liberal and socialist views, and the congress itself, in spite of all the thunder on the left, gave them every chance to be heard. Assuming its sponsors really hope to create a permanent organization with some standing in the cultural world, they had better manage somehow to give it a broader base and more democratic procedures.

After the congress adjourned, most of us went on to Warsaw. The Prime Minister had invited the delegates to a reception there the next night, and the government had prepared an impressive program of activities. Delegates who chose to do so could also spend eight or ten days traveling around Poland as guests of the country. Several Americans took advantage of this generous invitation, but the members of the One World committee were tied to a schedule that ruled outside junkets.

We took the night train from Wroclaw to Warsaw, traveling "hard." There were some of our number who looked upon this as a sign—the first—of anti-American discrimination, for they discovered as we walked along the dark platform beside the train that the Soviet delegation and a few others were stowing away their luggage in first-class compartments. I was, I'll admit, pained by the complaints of my suspicious compatriots. Most of the delegations were, like us, assigned to hard cars—with berths built on the model of flat park benches covered by thin pads. Besides which, I thought it a good experience for some of us to lay our bourgeois bones on wooden bunks. Poland is very short of rolling stock, and little can now be imported. Travelers are lucky who have any sort of bed to lie in on an overnight trip.

Warsaw

A SINGLE day in Warsaw is almost too much to take. With time the impact of wholesale destruction would lessen, and one would begin to realize how much new building and reconstruction had been accomplished in three years. But in one day you are so stunned by Warsaw's tragedy and by the immensity of the job remaining to be done that the prevailing atmosphere of energetic good spirits is hard to accept as real. Obviously it is real. *The Nation's* correspondent, Alexander Werth, whom I met, incidentally, for the first time at the Prime Minister's reception, has described better than anyone else the élan of the people and the effective work of the government. Even the recent political shake-up will not, I am sure, impede economic recovery unless it results in a tightening of restrictions which depresses the morale of the people. This seems to me most unlikely at least for the present. For the Communist-controlled Warsaw regime has three immense assets: enough food to keep the population healthy and satisfied; a program of reform—particularly land reform—which is rapidly wiping out the economic and social vestiges of feudalism and corruption; and visible improvement of the standard of living.

As long as these factors prevail, the people will have a sense of pride and participation in the progress of their country and will worry little about the absence of democratic procedures they have not, in any case, ever experienced. Only if the government bears down too heavily on the church or forces the peasant to give up his own farm will popular resistance become a problem. So far the Polish authorities, Communist or otherwise, have stepped lightly in these thorny fields. I was surprised at the number of priests and nuns we saw in the streets of Warsaw, and at churches being rebuilt while neighboring structures lay in ruins. My belief, gained from a number of long talks with officials both in Wroclaw and Warsaw, is that the government, while re-

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affirming its orthodoxy and abjuring all sympathy with the Belgrade heretics, is none the less determined to avoid measures which run counter to popular feeling. Poles have suffered enough in the past nine years: the government understands the political value of hope and a feeling of achievement.

I went alone to the ghetto. Even now I cannot describe the experience. Some people said, before I went, "The area is so cleared up you can't realize what happened." It would seem to me a poor imagination that failed to sense the horror of that empty desolation stretching endlessly in every direction. The small rubble, waist-high, the crazily distorted lamp-posts were worse than miles of ordinary ruins. And under one's feet, below the dirt and rubble, the charred bones of some forty thousand Warsaw Jews. Afterward a single sinister item kept coming into my head—the fact that the Nazis, in the midst of their "total" struggle, should have assigned precious man-power to the job of blasting out and clearing away the ruins of the ghetto. What mattered more than even the business of winning the war was to obliterate the last physical vestige of Polish Jewry, to wipe from the face of Poland the ghetto that had dared resist.

Some Political Premises

TWO opinions thrust themselves out of all the talk I listened to in Wroclaw and Warsaw. Both could be discounted as politically inspired: I am convinced they were usually held with painful sincerity. The first was the opinion that the United States was preparing to launch a war against the Soviet Union; the second, subordinate to the first and often cited as proof, that the United States is deliberately rebuilding Germany as a potential military power and a threat to all its neighbors.

We are so accustomed to hearing and dismissing these charges as Russian propaganda that it takes a while to realize how deeply implanted they are in the minds of millions of people. They have become premises rather than conclusions. I was asked privately, several times, whether I did not believe our government would soon attack Russia; and whether I thought we would permit socialism to spread or even to survive in Europe. Once the premise of America's aggressive intentions is adopted, everything fits into the pattern: the theory of capitalism's need of expansion to stave off collapse; American bases thousands of miles nearer the frontiers of Russia than the shores of the United States; American support of every reactionary force still surviving, from Franco and the Vatican and Ibn Saud all the way around to Chiang Kai-shek; American refusal of credits and trade facilities to the Eastern countries; military men in high office; "economic imperialism" camouflaged under E. R. P.; Western Union; the Bomb; our government's loyalty order; arrests of American leftists; visa restrictions; even the Taft-Hartley law. And as a clinching summary of the whole indictment, the restoration of German heavy industry under capitalist, often Nazi, direction.

I heard this list of charges recited in one order or another almost every day. To try to shift the premise to Russian expansion and argue the defensive character of policies initiated in Washington was futile. To try to differentiate and show how one threatening measure adopted in Moscow led to a compensating one in Washington, and so on in a dreary sequence of provocation and rebuttal, was like whistling into a high wind. It is not a risky generalization, I am sure, to say that most Eastern Europeans fear the United States. Even those whose hopes and traditions are democratic and who have experienced the full weight of Soviet pressure regard with misgivings America's post-war policy. I met several "Masaryks" in Warsaw and Prague, democrats who shrugged their shoulders in cynical despair over the measures adopted in Washington to defend the remnants of European democracy. Above all, they look at Germany, rapidly assuming a place at the heart of the Western Union, and even against their will they see in the American program a frightening indifference to the fears of the people of Europe.

Prague

BOTH in thinking and policy America tends to throw into a single basket the countries of Eastern Europe. Actually they are as different as they ever were in spite of Communist control. Even the Communists differ, as Tito has proved.

Our flight from Warsaw to Prague, again in a plane supplied by the Polish government, was so quick that the contrast between the two capitals seemed the more striking. Almost undamaged, the baroque beauty of the old Czech city was a welcome relief after the huge disorder of ruin and repair. The streets looked clean; the Alcron hotel was a model of well-appointed comfort and good service. But once the physical contrast was assimilated, the scales of difference tilted the other way. Where Warsaw was cheerful and full of life, Prague seemed sober, almost apathetic.

The officials who welcomed us were very friendly. At a pleasant reception given for the One World delegation representatives of the Foreign Office and the university expressed warm appreciation of LaGuardia and of American help during the period of UNRRA's operations. They said nothing about the door that banged shut when UNRRA ended. Without doubt they were happy to have us there and took our visit as evidence that American good-will toward Czechoslovakia is not dead. But there was little atmosphere of hope. Conversation was guarded. Nothing could have been farther

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removed from the almost exuberant self-confidence of the Poles.

Private persons spoke far more openly, and some were grimly critical of the regime. They predicted further purges and a progressive tightening of controls. Food was very short and rationing rigid—also in contrast to conditions in Poland—but I heard no complaints about this. The country is living through a period of economic stringency that resulted largely from the bad harvest of a year ago together with the almost total absence of foreign exchange; food that should have been consumed at home had to be exported. The people with whom I talked accepted without question the need of restrictions and careful planning; a few were of the opinion that Czechoslovakia might surmount its economic difficulties better than the E. R. P. countries, which would "end as dependents of the United States." What they hated was the disappearance of freedom from the universities, from the press, from public life. When I asked about the feeling of the workers, one friend answered: "Czech workers are democrats; they are politically sophisticated. Even Czech Communists, many of them, are really democrats—or were. They believed we could do it differently here. Now of course they keep their mouths shut. They prefer what they have to what they'd get if the government were overthrown."

Communist control in Poland has meant an obvious change for the better—from feudalism and a long succession of corrupt, near-fascist governments; from war and the horror of Nazi occupation. In Czechoslovakia the regime that took power in February has meant a rapid change for the worse: a decent, democratic government well embarked on a program of socialization has been replaced by the harsh rigidity of one-party rule. It is this, I am sure, that accounts for the contrast in the feeling of the two countries.

After I left Prague I heard a Czech diplomat characterize the situation in words I have not forgotten. "At least 60 per cent of the people are against the government," he said. "They won't do anything, though. Czechs don't revolt. They didn't even rise against the Nazis." "Perhaps not," I said, "but they showed their opposition in other ways. You are supposed to be stubborn people—especially about losing your freedom." He shrugged his shoulders and said: "No, the people will accept what is. They may not get to like it, but they won't resist." We discussed the question for a long time, and I was impressed by his rather hard-boiled objectivity. It was not until some time later that I learned he was a Communist.

[Miss Kirchwey was a member of the One World delegation that visited several countries in late August and September to dedicate schools and other institutions to the memory of Fiorella LaGuardia. Her next article will describe the delegation's visit to Italy.]

In the Wind

THE tumult and the shouting having died for another four merciful years, space in these pages is at somewhat less of a premium, and the Wind is allowed to flutter back into its familiar corner. While happy to congratulate Mr. Truman, the Wind rather wishes that Ben Benson could somehow have won office. Benson, in case you didn't know it, was running for the Vice-Presidency on the Hobo ticket. His party's platform, he recently wrote the New York *Daily News,* was a four-hour work day, a four-day work week, three months' vacation a year, and outlawing of the Communist Party.

EVEN MR. BENSON might be attracted by a job recently advertised in the Des Moines, Iowa, *Sunday Register.* He could set his own hours, earn a tidy salary, and apply himself to a labor of love. The ad: "Salesmen—Promoters. Sell copyright anti-Communist seals. Run your own deal. Timely proposition. Earn $300 to $1,000 commission weekly."

THERE OUGHT TO BE a good market for those seals up in Waterloo, Ontario. The Canadian Legion post in that community, a few weeks ago, undertook to have a hammer-and-sickle emblem and the motto "Workers of the World, Unite" chiseled off the face of one of the tombstones in Mount Hope Cemetery there.

SPEAKING OF the workers of the world, there was an editorial note in a recent issue of the *Daily Worker* that is worth recording: "Typographical errors distorted the meaning of . . . statements in the magazine section of last week's issue. . . . In the article, Which Way for Germany Now? a sentence read: 'While London was dismembering Germany and trying to turn the West German state into a democratic force. . . .' The sentence should have read: 'to turn the West German state into an anti-democratic force. . . .'"

PERHAPS A GREATER journalistic blunder was committed recently by "Old Bill," a columnist of the Norway and South Paris, Maine, *Advertiser-Democrat.* The homespun type, "Old Bill" had this to say on August 27: "Why, for —— [sic] sake, are they hunting for Communists and letting Henry Wallace go free? He is the worst Communist we have here." The remainder of the column was, somewhat surprisingly, a white-supremacy tirade with a Yankee twang. "Old Bill" may get by with that, but the Wind takes pleasure in calling the attention of Mr. Wallace's attorneys to the writer's prefatory remarks.

A DOWN EASTERNER more to the Wind's taste is Judge Frank C. Hughes of Squirrel Island, Maine, who is conducting a one-man fight to halt the reading of prayers and Bible stories in his township's classrooms. He has attacked the practice as "illegal and dangerous" and "immoral."

ELECTION POSTSCRIPT: It was good to hear of the broadening of the franchise in Griffin, Georgia. Election officials there granted Charles C. Cain, a Negro, the right to vote, without further examination of his qualifications, "as long as you live." Mr. Cain is ninety-nine years old.

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Burma—Nation in Torment

BY ANDREW ROTH

Singapore, October

THE Burmese government, staggering from six different armed revolts, is now further bedeviled by a clique of Rangoon astrologers who are demanding that it cease consulting the official panel of Buddhist abbots in Mandalay. It was the Mandalay abbots who by calculating the position of the stars found the auspicious day and minute for the birth of the Burmese Republic last January.

At that time many non-Buddhists thought the government had really been born under highly auspicious circumstances. The country's economic prospects seemed good: before the war it was the greatest exporter of rice in the world; now the whole East was hungry and willing to pay high prices for rice. Politically Burma appeared moderately united and stable, since almost all its political leaders were Socialists of one shade or another and in agreement on the need for agrarian reforms and nationalization of basic industries.

Today the government is struggling desperately to survive. Its weak, inexperienced, and unpopular administrators have about 15,000 troops with which to control an area larger than France, Belgium, and Switzerland together. And a third of these troops are either untrained or politically unreliable. The armed forces of the various insurgent groups total more than the government's. The "Red Flag" Trotskyists, who have been intermittently in revolt since 1946, have about 4,000 troops. The orthodox "White Flag" Communists, who rebelled last spring, have about 5,000. The "White Flag," near-Communist People's Volunteer Organization, which took up arms in July, has 3,000. One or two thousand regular soldiers and police have mutinied. The rebellious Karens have some 5,000 men under arms. And there are about 1,000 armed Arakanese Moslems, determined to have their area attached to East Pakistan. The strongest political opposition is offered by the orthodox Communists, who formed anti-Japanese guerrilla bands in central Burma during the war and organized strong peasant unions there afterward.

The people of Burma fall into four divisions. A handful of Britons controlled until recently not only the government but foreign trade, banking, and the big transportation, oil, and teak companies. Next to them in economic status are the "foreign minorities"—the 800,000 Indians and 250,000 Chinese who have long dominated internal trade and rural money lending. The Burmans themselves number 10,000,000, of whom 85 per cent are peasants. Below the Burmans, economically and politically, are the "indigenous minorities"—1,400,000 Karens, 1,000,000 Shans, 400,000 Kachins, 400,000 Chins, and many others, including the head-hunting Nagas. Most of these people live along the mountainous frontiers; many of them profess animism and have a tribal organization. The most formidable of the minorities are the Karens, who constitute the predominant group in the Karenni States, the only native states in Burma, are numerous in the hills along the Siam border, and are scattered through lower Burma. They tend to be darker than the Burmans and are the only group among whom Christian missionaries have made headway. Fully 250,000 have been converted, most of them by the American Baptist Mission.

Before the war the British separated the "frontier areas" from the rest of the country. On the assumption that they knew what these hill tribes needed better than the Burmans, they excluded them from the Burmese legislature's jurisdiction and governed them directly. During the war the frontier tribes were in general loyal to Britain, while the bulk of the Burmese nationalists sided with the Japanese. At the end of the war the British were prepared to grant Burma independence but doubted whether the frontier peoples would join hands with Burma proper. Many British officials, hoping to retain for Britain the strategic approaches to India, China, and Siam, tried to convince the mountain tribes that, with British help, they could have a separate and happy existence. The Churchill government's White Paper on Burma proposed to keep the two areas separate, and the theme was clearly sounded in the speeches of Conservatives in Parliament in May, 1947.

Burmese nationalists, however, wanted no division of the country. Aung San declared, "Independence would be nullified if the frontier areas were kept under the direct control of His Majesty's government." In the London talks of January, 1947, Aung San convinced the British government that he was adamant on this matter, and it agreed to a conference with the frontier peoples to be held the following March under the chairmanship of David Rees-Williams, the present Colonial Under Secretary. This conference produced a unanimous report that the frontier peoples would join with the plains people in a single Union of Burma if the constitution gave them adequate guaranties

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When the Constituent Assembly opened in June, 1947, its 210 seats had been increased by 45 to insure adequate representation for the frontier peoples. The idea of creating autonomous regions was borrowed from the constitutions of the U. S. S. R. and Yugoslavia, but it was impracticable to grant autonomy to all the frontier peoples and it was particularly difficult in the case of the Karens, who were so widely dispersed. In the end a compromise was embodied in the constitution providing that the Karens were to be governed by a Karen Affairs Council to be elected by the entire Karen community. The Karenni States were allowed autonomy.

The flag of Burma when it was hoisted on independence day contained five white stars, for Burma proper and the four chief indigenous minorities. But in its administration the government has not lived up to its constitutional promises, and Karen resentment has grown. Many Karens have joined the Karen National Union, which has worked for a Karen state achieved by constitutional methods. Others have advocated the use of force. Burmese intelligence officers charge that a group of Englishmen is using the Karens to bring about the downfall of Burma's Socialist regime and the installation of one more friendly to British interests. This group is said to include Sir Reginald Dorman-Smith, former governor of Burma, London managers of British firms in Burma which are being nationalized, and some former officers of the Southeast Asia Command who were opposed to Lord Mountbatten's policy of yielding to Aung San.

At the end of August the Karen extremists struck and set up a provisional capital at Moulmein. The supreme commander of the Burmese armed forces, General Smith Dun—himself a Christian Karen—promised to suppress them just as vigorously as he had acted against the other insurgents, but the president of the moderate Karen National Union has managed to postpone hostilities while a government commission tries to work out a compromise.

LARGELY because its opponents are splintered, the Burmese government, with little popular support, has managed to keep control of the large cities and chief communication lines, although Rangoon itself has been threatened. The insurgents are too weak to risk major positional warfare, but they hold considerable sections of the country and are mobile enough to evade destruction. The extent of Burma's political disintegration is seen in the fact that almost 40 per cent of its parliamentary representatives are in revolt or in jail. Its economic condition is indicated by the 80 per cent drop in its rice exports.

Burma's tragedy affects all of southern Asia. India, Ceylon, and Malaya look to it for most of their rice supplies. A shortage of rice in Malaya will cause more unrest than the efforts of the 5,000 Communist guerrillas there. Moreover, if the Communists take over Burma, they will have a base in Southeast Asia with dangerous potentialities. Burma shoulders East Pakistan, which already has considerable agrarian unrest—and a red Burma would certainly influence India. It adjoins the poorly organized state of Siam and is close to the long coastline of Malaya. It could also serve as a link with the Communists of southwestern China. British officials in the area are greatly concerned, but the Burmese are such ardent nationalists that the landing of British troops in aid of the government would lose it all popular support.

During the early post-war period virtually all Burmese nationalist factions joined together in the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. They were united in demanding complete independence and internal reforms like those instituted by the Chinese Communists, but they disagreed about pace and tactics in attaining these ends. The Stalinist Communists always attacked any tendency of the league's leadership to compromise with Britain. In 1946 they were expelled from the league for objecting to Aung San's joining the Executive Council while Britain was still in control. Last winter they attacked the agreements with Britain reached by Premier Thakin Nu, Aung San's successor, as "bogus independence." Although Burma attained complete political independence, Thakin Nu accepted an economic agreement under which Burma would stay in the sterling area and pay "equitable" compensation for nationalized British industries. This and the military treaty, the Communists said, made Burma an adjunct of the "Anglo-American war machine."

The showdown came in March and April, in the wake of the Calcutta conference of the Indian Communist Party. At this conference the delegates from the Burmese and other Southeast Asia Communist parties were apparently told to make bids for power in order to prevent the area from being consolidated as part of the Anglo-American sphere in the looming World War III. The government attempted to nip the Communist plan in the bud by seizing the Communist leaders. Open warfare followed.

The most significant development in succeeding months was the split in the People's Volunteer Organization. A paramilitary body formerly controlled by Aung Sang, the P. V. O., together with the Socialist Party, has been since 1946 the main prop of the Anti-Fascist League coalition. A majority of the P. V. O.—referred to above as the "White Flag" P. V. O.—tried to bring about a compromise between the Communists and the government. When the latter proved recalcitrant, this majority, in July, took up arms, carrying part of the army with them. In general they have not fought the government troops except when attacked and may yet be taken back into the government. If they are, it will indicate that the Premier is ready to compromise with the Communists.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

It's Better with a Pumpkin

ALL HALLOWS' EVE. By Charles Williams. With an Introduction by T. S. Eliot. Pellegrini and Cudahy. $2.75.

ONE of the lesser mysteries of the literary life is the curiously incautious enthusiasm with which one author will indorse the work of another; confronted with practically anything between covers, even the most reputable writer will often allow discretion to fly out of the window and hyperbole to fly in. The public, however, is now sufficiently initiated to translate a phrase such as "greater than Gogol" into "quite good," and if it were only Dorothy Sayers and C. S. Lewis who described the death of Charles Williams as a major loss to British letters (he died in 1945 with three other novels, five non-fiction books, and two volumes of poetry to his credit), then one would begin to read with an open mind. But when T. S. Eliot writes a ten-page introduction in which he wholeheartedly praises the work itself, the character and personality of the author, and all his other works, the reader is justified in beginning on the book with an expectancy of pleasure and reward that in this case is not likely, for the majority, to be fulfilled.

"All Hallows' Eve" is, though Mr. Eliot might object to the term, a "mystic" novel. The two characters to whom we are first introduced are dead—two girls killed by a falling plane—and the rest, though still in the land of the living, have a strangely moribund quality. Besides the two dead girls, Lester and Evelyn, the not-so-quick are represented by Richard (Lester's husband), Jonathan (a painter of genius), Lady Wallingford, wife of a British air marshal and mistress for one highly charged night in the distant past of Simon the Clerk—a sorcerer-cum-evangelist with quite remarkable powers and a large following of faithful. The cast is more or less completed by Betty, the offspring of Lady Wallingford's night of sacred and profane love—a pretty but slightly weak-minded girl who is used by Simon the Clerk as his messenger to the other world and by Jonathan as the object of his affections.

These characters, or perhaps personages would be a better word, wander more or less at will between this world and the next, representing, one supposes, various aspects and degrees of Good and Evil. Lady Wallingford is out and out Evil, even going so far as frequently incarcerating Betty in a house in the country and making her act as housemaid; Simon the Clerk is predominantly Evil but apart from his one slip-up with Lady Wallingford is strongly ascetic and has aspects of Good —outweighed by his lust for Power. The dead Lester is Good, while Evelyn is mildly Evil and Richard and Jonathan, though earth-bound, are destined to be Good.

In the climax, which takes place on All Hallows' Eve, Love triumphs over Evil in a very macabre setting. Simon the Clerk, in his abode—home seems hardly a suitable term for his dwelling-place—is attempting to do Betty in, voodoo style, with an ectoplasmic dummy and a needle, aided by Evelyn, who is temporarily inhabiting a magic semi-human shape created by Simon out of dust and spittle. Lady Wallingford is also abetting, while Lester, Richard, and Evelyn—who *is* also inside the magic shape—are rooting for the other side. The roof suddenly begins to leak; the ectoplasmic dummy melts in the rain, as does the magic shape. Simon the Clerk then proceeds to go to hell, Lady Wallingford to go off her head, Betty takes to faith-healing with staggering success, Evelyn goes off into her lonely City of the Dead, while Jonathan and Richard derive some satisfaction from the promise of requited love—in the present and future respectively. The message seems a little garbled.

This plot summary, if such it can be called, is really not completely unfair. Mr. Williams writes in a form suggestive of the morality play and the fable, and yet he has failed to point a moral and only hints at what Mr. Eliot describes as his "mysticism of Love." His prose is flat and undistinguished, and his characters have neither grandeur nor three dimensions. It is certain, as Mr. Eliot points out, that Mr. Williams is telling us about a world of experience known to *him* and that "what he has to say comes close to defying definition." But such experiences *can* be better defined and in more or less the same form, as for instance by Edgar Allan Poe. Moreover, as they are of such an intensely private nature there seems little excuse for expressing them except in the most elevated language or in a symbolism of universal import such as is employed by St. John of the Cross. Obviously Mr. Williams must appeal strongly to people whose experiences match his own, as witness Eliot, Dorothy Sayers, and C. S. Lewis, but to the average person who knows All Hallows' Eve from the standpoint of burnt cork and the pumpkin, he is likely to prove both a puzzle and a bore.

ANTHONY BOWER

A "Laboristic Economy"

THE AMERICAN ECONOMY. By Sumner H. Slichter. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.75.

PROFESSOR SLICHTER is a man of opinions. Hardly a page in this book is without one or two, and they completely outweigh in importance the incidental expository passages. A high percentage of the opinions are provocative of debate, and a reviewer cannot help feeling chagrin that he will have to pass so many by without comment. It would be very profitable fun to go through the book voting "Yea" or "Nay" on all the ideas put up for discussion.

On the whole Professor Slichter is pleased with the American economy. He thinks it has done a good job. But unlike some who render the same verdict, he would like to see it better run. A good many of his suggestions to that end will curl the hair of more staid private enterprisers; and almost as many will inspire the impatience of more radical reformers, even some academicians less devoted to orthodox economics. Professor Slichter wants to

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tinker; he does not want to reconstruct.

Of the four problems he picks out as basic—industrial relations, stability, international economic policy, provision of incentives for expansion—he devotes most space to the second. He wants the public interest in negotiated industrial contracts more clearly recognized, and he wants a far more liberal import policy than currently exists. As to economic stability, he recognizes that it must somehow be achieved if the direction of affairs is not to pass into the hands of men more ruthless than he will ever be. Since he does recognize that fact, it is rather remarkable that his suggestions for achieving stability are so limited in scope. They center about tax revision and credit control.

As to credit, the basic idea he offers is that "the growth of credit should be kept down to the lowest rate that permits a satisfactory rise in employment." "As a practical matter, the problem . . . during periods of expansion [like the present] . . . is likely to be how to restrain credit without inducing a drop in production and employment." Precisely; and the timing of the restraining action is of the essence of the matter. With some elaboration of the powers over credit, and the firm lodgment of them in the hands of the government—*not* the banks—Professor Slichter seems to feel the timing question could be solved. Skepticism is in order. And one may also presume to doubt that credit control is more than one of a whole arsenal of powers needed.

Professor Slichter himself seems to feel the same way, for while he discusses credit at great length under the general heading of stability, he elevates incentives to expansion to the status of a problem in itself, equal in status to stability. "Incentives to expansion" is his way of putting the problem of capital investment. He has many acute things to say about it, and he is to be commended for rejecting the idea of economic maturity. But surely he should not have come down so heavily on tax revision as *the* solution of the problems involved. Almost on a "by the way" basis he mentions government ownership of industries requiring large and constant investment, but perhaps his casualness about the matter reflects his realization that the suggestion leads step by step into very deep water, indeed. Professor Slichter is not too fond of deep water.

Running through the book is the idea that the "American economy is a laboristic economy, or at least is rapidly becoming one." "I mean," he writes, "that employees are the most influential group in the community and that the economy is run in their interest more than in the interest of any other economic group." He hopes—expects?—that the policy makers of the emerging laboristic economy—in his conception, union leaders, not, strangely enough, labor politicians—will permanently accept the essentials of private enterprise. This hope seems founded on the idea that the American experience with private enterprise is so heartening, the basic thesis of the whole book, that the infiltration of the laboristic ideas characteristic in the United Kingdom, on the Continent, even in Australia and New Zealand, is improbable. This line of reasoning is difficult to follow. What Professor Slichter apparently believes to be indicative of the laboristic ideas we may expect to flourish here are mostly expressions of American labor's inveterate pragmatism, followed consciously and unconsciously by the leaders when acting within a social context in which they do not themselves feel they have the power Professor Slichter imputes to them. When labor really begins to flex its muscles, it will, like labor overseas, develop independent political aspirations and a party organization to give them force. At that time we shall be in a position to judge how far our American laboristic society is to be governed by ideas peculiarly American in origin and expression. At that stage, unless we are in for an extraordinarily rich period of American laboristic thinking meanwhile, the ideas put forward will probably have strong affinities to overseas ideas. This may be deplorable—it may, as Professor Slichter believes, lead to the sacrifice of some genuinely important social values—but from the record to date it seems inescapable.

But is America as laboristic today as Professor Slichter thinks? May we not be running way ahead of ourselves in worrying about what ideas American labor ultimately may entertain?

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN

The One and the Many

A LITTLE DEMOCRACY IS A DANGEROUS THING. By Charles W. Ferguson. Association Press. $1.50.

IT WOULD be easy to ridicule a book which condemns national governments, parties, and economies, yet simultaneously puts its trust in a world government. The best governments we have, says the author, are far from democratic; they fumble the realities which concern people most closely, because the leaders do not trust the people and the people cannot make their voices heard. Nevertheless, referendums have shown that the people want a government which would exercise power over the whole globe, and we are left to infer that the voters know what they mean when they demand such a government, and that if national leaders would only bow to the people's will and establish it, the world state would fulfil the citizens' highest aspirations.

No thoughtful person, however, would be satisfied with so easy a way of dismissing a plea which is deeply felt, corresponds closely with much au-

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thentic experience, and points correctly at a dangerous flaw of contemporary civilization. People need a sense of participation in common effort. When they feel that they are outsiders and are treated as such, nothing goes well, whether it is international affairs, national politics, or work in an industrial plant. When, as in the recent war or in a democratically run local organization, they feel responsibiilty for achieving a common goal and have work to do which is important and is believed to be important, miracles may be accomplished. What is more, the individuals concerned are happier and better human beings.

How to evoke—or permit—this general participation in the vast and mechanized aggregates which incrust twentieth-century society is a problem about which much has been thought and done, with far too little result. The author's two suggested remedies, group discussion and referendums, however desirable in special circumstances, seem puny in comparison with the complex problems involved. He needs to analyze more closely the issues introduced to us many years ago by Graham Wallas in "The Great Society," to distinguish more carefully the role of the individual as specialist and the individual as citizen, to probe the differences between actual participation and the attitude of participation without the necessary competence or the power to affect action. His impulse is valid, but here as elsewhere, to repeat the word "democracy" is no charm with which one may exorcise demons. GEORGE SOULE

Whales and Unicorns

ANIMAL FACTS AND FALLACIES. By Osmond P. Breland. Harper and Brothers. $3.

THE LUNGFISH, THE DODO, AND THE UNICORN. By Willy Ley. The Viking Press. $3.75.

THESE two books are not as much alike as their titles might suggest, though both are full of curious and interesting facts. The first, by a professor of zoology at the University of Texas, undertakes to answer in nearly two hundred short articles such questions as How Fast Can Birds Fly? and Can Horned Toads Squirt Blood from Their Eyes? The answer to the second question is "Yes"—which is one of the things which helps to make "Animal Facts and Fallacies" a sort of dignified "Believe It or Not." It is also, however, a sort of modern version of Sir Thomas Browne's "Pseudodoxia Epidemica," since it is as much concerned with the wonders which aren't so as with the often more wonderful wonders which are. Professor Breland covers a good deal of ground and he seems to have taken great pains to get the best as well as the latest formation. Fundamentalists, who do not get much comfort these days, will be pleased to learn that the sperm whale could have swallowed Jonah and that individuals have been captured containing pieces of squid larger than a man's body.

"The Lungfish, the Dodo, and the Unicorn" is a newly revised and enlarged edition of a work published originally in 1941 by an Americanized German who specializes in research along the byways of science. A good many creatures—extant, extinct, or mythological—are investigated very thoroughly indeed. If you want to know how the legend of the unicorn rose and fell or what reasons there are for believing that something like the Giant Squid really exists and that it may actually have successfully attacked boats full of unfortunate sailors, this is probably the best place to find out. Mr. Ley writes very clear, direct exposition. He also digs into history with what is traditionally called German thoroughness. All in all, his is quite a remarkable book.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Status and Elan

AMERICA THROUGH BRITISH EYES. Compiled and Edited by Allan Nevins. Oxford University Press. $6.

THIS volume demonstrates anew the number and the intimacy of the bonds that connect American and British culture. Yet one puts it down with the distinct feeling that it is also a sourcebook for a clear-cut and bona fide case of contact between two complexes of attitudes that are quite different. The differences between America and Britain are fewer than those between America and, say, France or Russia, but there are differences, and they are both important and easy to locate.

As one reads the British judgments upon America which Professor Nevins has collected in this anthology, one is haunted at least as much by Thorstein Veblen as by Ruth Benedict—and Oswald Spengler. Here one finds the testimony of men and women who came seeking our formalizations of conspicuous consumption, and found no such formalizations. Here one also finds the testimony of men and women who were attracted to the American way of life precisely because conspicuous consumption was not formalized, and precisely

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because pomp and concept are missing from the cornerstones and keystones of our way of life. (Graham Hutton and Lord Tweedsmuir are representatives of this group.)

However, one sees Thorstein Veblen sitting in judgment over the interactions of British and American culture for reasons deeper than the mere presence of certain status-forms in British society and their mere mechanical absence from American society. Thorstein Veblen was committed to a dialectic. The polar elements of this dialectic were free-running human energy and social status with its badges. Free-running human energy and social status, however, are precisely the polarities involved in the interaction of Britain and America. True, it may require the intellectual honesty and stature of a Matthew Arnold to grasp the full and exact meaning of this fact, but it is just this dialectic that furnishes the solution to the Elgar-like riddle of the reaction to each other's culture of British and American intellectuals.

Fundamentally, then, American history is a history of uncontrolled human explosion. It was, basically, because we did not give a damn where, in historical time, the American herd of wild horses went, just so long as it kept moving and feeding, that we never really assigned limits to its course and range. Our free-running energy shoved the frontier into the Pacific, brought on the mushrooming of the economic empires and the giant trade unions, geared our national life to the programmatics of high-pressure management and salesmanship, and covered our nineteenth-century interiors with tobacco juice. America exploded in Judge Lynch, Walt Whitman, and Thomas Edison. It exploded again in the I. W. W., in Roscoe Pound, in boogie-woogie, in the atom bomb, and in Hunter Guthrie. These detonations struck the ears of the British intellectual, and they produced discomfort in writers as different from one another as Frances Trollope, Matthew Arnold, and H. G. Wells.

The basic difference between British and American attitudes is the fact that status is the central term in the Britisher's social outlook. This will surprise those who study British society from Winston Churchill's war speeches and the Labor Party's campaign literature, but we believe the answer lies just here. The Britisher sees himself as a member of a class, among other things, and the more spectacular varieties of success involve, very explicitly, the transcendence of class affiliation. That is to say, the Britisher is highly conscious of the social level upon which he remains or through which he progresses or regresses. It is this class factor which prevents the Britisher from taking the kind of attitude toward his relation to the world which results in a projection of the Paul Bunyan image and the assigning of a central position to it. (Walter Mitty always wakes up and deflates; Paul Bunyan never. Furthermore, Mitty does not lie as deep in the British consciousness as Bunyan does in the American.)

Here, then, is the common psychological factor that runs through the greater portion of British judgments upon America; the Britisher is scandalized by the idea of sociologically naked—or, at best, half-dressed—individuals engaged in a head-on assault upon a sociologically naked universe.

This is not Professor Nevins's interpretation of British comment upon America. Professor Nevins has practically nothing to say about the sociological and psychological perspectives of the writers whose statements he has collected. He is, rather, interested in plotting the rising curve of general British understanding of, and sympathy toward, America. The bonds of generalized mutual understanding have been tightening, of course. Nevertheless, the background of difference in perspectives—of status in one case and élan in the other—remains. British socialism can dissolve this background of difference in the solidarity of two like-aspiring national communities if it realizes in practice the Socialist principle that each individual must have the right to make his unique contribution to his community's history. MARK BURGUNKER

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Less than half of the writers quoted can claim professional status, but all of them tell of things which they saw at first hand. Some of the inclusions are startling, such as the earliest account of a Norse ship burial written by an Arab missionary who witnessed it on the Volga in 922 A. D. Others are delightful like the well-chosen excerpts from Johan Turi's "Book of Lappland." This little-known classic gives an unforgettable picture of man in conflict with implacable nature as seen by a people who

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take courage as much for granted as sight or hearing. There are old favorites, such as Bernal Diaz's account of the arrival of Cortez and his men at the great city Tenochtitlan and of what he himself saw as he wandered about the Aztec capital. And there are items never published before—an account of Icelandic life in the Viking Age compiled from the Sagas, an account of the hand-to-mouth existence of the African pigmies by one who has known them for many years, and the best description of the division of labor and actual working of caste in an Indian village which the reviewer has encountered. This book should be on the shelves of all who are interested in the varieties of human experience.

RALPH LINTON

Fiction in Review

IT IS inevitable that Theodor Plievier's "Stalingrad" (Appleton-Century-Crofts, $3) should be compared to Erich Remarque's "All Quiet on the Western Front," since it stands in much the same relation to the fiction of this war that Remarque's novel did to the fiction of World War I. That is, it is the first novel—so far as I know—of this war to appear in this country written from the point of view not of the winning but of the losing side. It is also the first novel of this war to portray German soldiers as human beings capable of the full range of human suffering instead of as contrivances, puppets of their political fate. Again, like "All Quiet," "Stalingrad" appears here after an enormous success in its original German publication. Finally, like Remarque's novel, Mr. Plievier's owes its impact—and it is a very considerable impact—far less to its power of art and thought than to the passion of its protest against the whole hideous business of war.

I suppose this protest, to be more truly effective, must always come from the defeated side. The mere fact that a nation is triumphant in a war is bound to look like a justification for all the miseries that were endured; after all, one's soldiers bled and died for a purpose—to achieve the victory of one's principles; and everyone knows that only right can be victorious. The lost battle is alone without meaning or purpose, alone stripped of illusion and therefore able to show war in its stark naked horror.

By choosing the German débâcle before Stalingrad as the setting of his novel, Mr. Plievier chooses, of course, the quintessential moment of meaningless suffering for the German side in the recent conflict. When the story opens—if it can be called a story: actually, Mr. Plievier gives us a panorama rather than a narrative—the defeat of the German forces has already been assured; what follows is simply the slow turning of the pages of a book of foretold doom. Every level of the military hierarchy is caught in the giant process of annihilation, from the lowliest gravedigger trying to bury the ever-mounting pile of frozen corpses to the frenzied generals compelled to hold out to the last gasp long after any breath of hope has ceased. To the usual paraphernalia of war's tortures—the starvation and pain and madness and fear—the scene before Stalingrad added the special nightmare of unendurable cold. One would have thought oneself inured, through the fiction and movies of the last decade, to even the grizzliest details of human degradation and hardship; but it is Mr. Plievier's sad distinction to have reproduced a history of horrors to which no sane mind can come with sufficient preparation not to sicken and refuse to believe. Alongside the war of "Stalingrad"—or perhaps alongside civilization as it has progressed in the last twenty-five years?—the war of "All Quiet on the Western Front" was a story for children.

Considering Mr. Plievier's political past, his novel is singularly unpolitical in both its approach and its conclusions. There is no attempt to pigeonhole its many characters in their proper places in the Nazi system, no impulse to correlate their personal and political attitudes—and this is one of the happier aspects of the book. Less happy is the political irresolution in which the book ends, its conclusion that the therapy for a desperately ill society is love—the kind of unnamed and unasking love of man for man which is exemplified in the novel by the devotion of the humble Sergeant Gnotke to his stricken comrade, or the kind of classless association in affection which is represented by the understanding between Gnotke and his colonel. Every decent person in the world would agree with Mr. Plievier that we should all love one another; very likely, even the least decent members of society live by the same principle, according to their own lights. There remains, therefore, quite a job of definition—and not only of definition but of investigation into the private and social sources and possibilities of this most desirable condition of life. As in the case of love of God—and Mr. Plievier would

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surely seem to be moving toward a religious position—so, I am afraid, in the case of love of man: it has never been produced by the mere asking for it, nor maintained without governance.

Before the question of the literary quality of Mr. Plievier's novel, the reviewer must lay down arms. If the profound terror and misery it communicates are a valid measure of its achievement as a piece of writing—and I believe they must be, else one would respond to "Stalingrad" only with revulsion—then it is a quite remarkable literary performance. On the other hand, how good can a novel be the whole of whose impress is simply the force of its horror? There is no complete character in Mr. Plievier's story, just as there is no completed moment of conflict or drama; there is only the completed experience of a not-to-be-thought-of insanity. This can scarcely constitute a conventional critical recommendation.

It is much easier to deal, in the usual ways of the reviewer, with Joel Sayre's "The House Without a Roof" (Farrar, Straus, $2.75) or Samuel Spewack's "The Busy Busy People" (Houghton Mifflin, $3), both of which one can guarantee to provide a pleasant, literate evening's entertainment. Mr. Sayre's book is not exactly a novel; it is fictionalized reporting—an educated American's quick, smooth view of what it could have been like to be a nice person in Nazi Germany. Mr. Spewack's book has the pace and gloss of standard good light fiction but underneath its gay exterior takes itself, one suspects, too seriously as teacher of an important lesson about the Soviet Union. Not that I disagree with one thing Mr. Spewack says about dictatorships in general and Russia in particular. It just strikes me as being a bit late in the day for giving people that pill in so much sugar-coating. There was a time when one had to bore from within the ranks of blind adherence to the great experiment; then I think it would have served a real purpose to combine, as "The Busy Busy People" does, so much entertainment with so much sound counter-propaganda. But now those ranks are thinned and open, and the care with which Mr. Spewack balances his work of pleasure and work of education is anachronistic and embarrassing. His novel is recommended chiefly for its fun.

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Verse Chronicle

CONSIDER this time, three poets who rely, for much of their effect, on devices of irony and satire: Peter Viereck, with "Terror and Decorum" (Scribner's, $3); A. M. Klein, "The Rocking Chair and Other Poems" (Ryerson, $2.25); and Kenneth Fearing, "Stranger at Coney Island" (Harcourt, Brace, $2).

It is a little severe to Mr. Viereck to treat of him along with the others, for he is the youngest, this is his first book, and he has, I hope he knows, a good deal to learn. His temperament and talent incline him toward satire, but his performance is marred by the way he gives it too much of the old college try, shows off, I think, an awful lot; parades his information, sometimes his cleverness; offends against detachment, sometimes against taste, as in his poem on Hart Crane. To take another instance, his seven stanzas entitled Ode to Throne and Altar, "inspired by the M. P. chasing me through Algiers," might better have been cut to five: the strength of the beginning and end, the wit and the compassion—this latter need not always be a foreign body in the satirist's eye—are vitiated by the ostentatious-seeming catalogue of allusions in the middle stanzas. There's a lushness, a romantic tendency toward the *überspannt,* a kind of easy-come about Mr. Viereck's vocabulary and epithet; in particular, he needs to be on guard against a trick of repetition: "live while I may—*run, run* no matter where," "to think of *birds, the birds* I leave behind"—he does this sort of thing pretty often. This sort of thing happens, occasionally, because one has a metrical problem to solve; the solution proves happier than one's fondest dream; then it seems like such a good stunt it's worth doing again—look, no hands!—and presently it is too easy altogether. The function of the ironist is to take down, or mark the taking down, of the vain and proud, whether man or institution; knowing the ways of Nemesis, he must keep on himself a very cautious watch, all the time, lest he too be guilty of *Hybris.*

A. M. Klein is a Canadian poet, not as well known in this country as he will be if this book gets the hearing it deserves. Some of his work has appeared in American magazines and in anthologies of Canadian poetry. If my memory is trustworthy, Mr. Klein has grown tremendously, out of a rather heavy, rather self-conscious, rather morbid and wilfully alien idiom into full stature. The Jewish sensibility on which his jacket-introducers both remark has, more than Mr. Viereck's blurb-writer claims on his behalf, succeeded in "the attempt to portray men and women as a humanistic whole." Mr. Klein's book has, in its three dozen poems, great variety of approach, of content, of form; an excellent craftsman, he can give even our Mr. Auden a lesson or two in the humility of unobtrusiveness; the technical skill goes beyond itself, does not call for notice, does not invite distraction from the thing said by the way of saying it, rather enforces that way of saying because matter and manner so perfectly fit. Mr. Klein has insight, and a sense of correspondences: Les Filles Majeures puts him in Rilke's company, The Green Old Age in Baude-

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laire's. Half a dozen poems, stretching it to the limit, seem to me relatively uninteresting, in some instances, perhaps, because of local allusions I do not understand; a longish poem, Montreal, seems to me a half-success, but a brave failure, in its attempt to bilingualize its vocabulary. Grain Elevator, Indian Reservation, Frigidaire (there's a poem with the homely touch for you, and real delight, and no sentimentalizing of machinery); Dress Manufacturer, Fisherman; Lookout, Mount Royal; Lone Bather; Université de Montréal; Annual Banquet: Chambre de Commerce (so to the point, that one, and a masterpiece of ironical statement in the last line); Hormisdas Arcand; and others—the catalogue of citation grows, as you see, long, for all its omissions, and probably a little boring unless you are going to buy the book. Finally (sorry there is no space to quote), there is the last poem, Portrait of the Poet as Landscape, on the strength of which I am compelled to reconsider my prejudices against poems about poetry and poets.

Kenneth Fearing's poems are less prosy, more formal, than their appearance on the page would indicate. The long line, the irregular, or not particularly anything, stanza pattern invite the risk of sagging; Mr. Fearing is a master of not letting the line down, and he can, with a very slight and deft touch indeed, point up his ironic effects with a brief parenthesis, an apparent afterthought, a single adverb or adjective. "We only know, and give profound thanks, that Irene is on our side," for instance, where the whole effect, culminating the poem, derives from the two commas and the word "profound." A few of these poems seem a little thin, a little *vieux jeu*; these, it is rather sad to notice, mostly appeared in *Poetry*, which used once upon a time to be rather ahead of the procession. Mr. Fearing does what he does so very well that it is all a little exasperating; you wish he would be a bit more venturesome, inventive, experimental—try what he could do, for instance, with a shortened line, some rhymes, a strict stanza form—and thereby gain even more significant tension. And perhaps, in addition to this, a little refreshment of mood, a whiff of irresponsible gaiety, an elegy, however jocose, for the elegiac.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES

Drama

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"MINNIE AND MR. WILLIAMS" (Morosco Theater) is by Richard Hughes, a British writer whose fantastic narrative "The Innocent Voyage" won him a group of admirers almost constituting a cult. His play is said to have been written quite a number of years ago and to have waited until now for an American producer willing to take the rather obvious risks. Put on at last by a new firm composed of John Gassner and David Dietz, it amounts to what looks like an honorable and ambitious undertaking that does not quite come off.

Mr. Hughes begins promisingly enough to tell the tale of a saintly pastor in a Welsh village who takes into his house a mysterious female child and continues, out of the invincible kindliness of his heart, to keep her even after it has become plain that she is, literally, an imp out of hell. That situation is piquant enough, and the performers start off bravely to get the most there is out of it. Elizabeth Ross, a relatively unknown young actress, does an excellent job of suggesting the devilishness beneath a childish exterior, Eddie Dowling acts the saintly pastor, and Josephine Hull contributes the best performance of the evening in the role of his simple-minded wife.

But Mr. Hughes does not seem quite to know where to go from there. The imp corrupts the soul of the wife by performing a diabolical miracle in her interests, the pastor finally dies, and at the last moment the imp—apparently seduced from her own faith by the presence of so much goodness—slips his soul into heaven when she was supposed to escort him to hell.

Whenever an unusual play of this sort fails on Broadway, there is a tendency to search for obscure explanations discreditable to the commercial theater. Perhaps such a play would be able to run if production were not so dreadfully expensive. Perhaps there is a kind of goodness too quiet for the blare and bustle of a Broadway first night. And there may very well be occasions when some such observations are genuinely appropriate. But in nine cases out of ten —and this is not the tenth—they are not really called for. The trouble with "Minnie and Mr. Williams" is, I think, simply that the script is not good enough, and that no amount of acting, no elaborateness of production, no embellishment with good Welsh singing such as is here provided can conceal the fact.

As long as Mr. Hughes can get along on what looks like a picturesque folk tale he is effective enough, but that tale could be told in less than half the normal time of a theatrical performance, and his attempts to make it the vehicle for philosophical reflections simply do not come off. There is a good deal of talk by the imp about the religion of evil and the impressiveness of hell's devotion to its cause. What Mr. Hughes seems to be preaching is a sort of tentative diabolism watered down a bit after being compounded out of random suggestions from Blake, Nietzsche, and possibly the Marquis de Sade. But he doesn't stick by even this not very resolute profession of faith, for the imp's final weakness seems like a last-minute retraction which leaves us nowhere. Broadway cynics will also point out that all three curtains are brought down on the same gag—the in-

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dependent misbehavior of the satanic leg which the imp gave to Minnie in place of a virtuous wooden one. That was funny the first time, a bit stale the second, and quite intolerable the third. The author's invention fails him both when he is being a philosopher and when he is being a gagster.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Music

B. H. HAGGIN

THE brilliant stage spectacle that Verdi's "Aida" should be, it was not at New York's City Center. Perhaps it could not be, with the limitations of stage and budget. But in addition there were the limitations of Thomas Komisarjevsky, the stage director, and H. A. Condell, the designer. It was characteristic of Mr. Komisarjevsky that he should engage in research into the period of the Egyptian-Ethiopian wars for the purpose of achieving historic authenticity in the costumes of a production of an opera with music as historically unauthentic as Verdi's for "Aida"; and characteristic of Mr. Condell, whose scenery was better than usual this time, that the costumes as they presented themselves to the eye should be absurd when they were not frightful in their ugliness and bad taste.

As usual, then, it was only the musical performance that was enjoyable—the curiously untraditional but musically sensitive and effective performance conducted by Halasz, with beautiful singing by Suzy Morris, Camilla Williams, Lawrence Winters, and some of the others.

The demonstrations at the second "Pelléas et Mélisande" were for what in fact were outstanding in the performance: Carlton Gauld's singing and acting as Golaud, and Morel's conducting, which produced a realization of the orchestral score that was amazing in its precision of execution and coloring, and which geared orchestra and singers with similar precision. There was also beautiful singing by Norman Scott, the Arkel; but Maggie Teyte and Fernand Martel were, for me, among the weaknesses of the performance.

Mozart's Concerto K.242 for three pianos has been recorded for Columbia by Rosina Lhevinne, Vronsky, and Babin with Thomas Scherman's Little Orchestra Society (MM-771, $4.75). The work seems to me one of the minor products of the Mozart craftsmanship; the pianists merely rattle off their notes smoothly; the orchestra plays with more life in its phrasing. The performance is well reproduced.

Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2, a dull piece to my ears (unlike No. 1, which I consider one of his finest works), is performed by Malcuzynski with the Philharmonia Orchestra under Kletski (MM-776, $6). Malcuzynski plays melodic passages with the excessive elasticity of pace that is generally accepted as correct for Chopin; in this style, which I consider incorrect, he plays very beautifully; and the joint performance of orchestra and pianist is excellently reproduced.

Also well reproduced are good performances by the Covent Garden Orchestra under Lambert of a few excerpts from Tchaikovsky's charming music for "The Sleeping Beauty": Panorama, Pages' Dance, Aurora's Solo, Vision Scene, Red Riding Hood, March (MX-302, $3.50). And another of the excellent recording-jobs that Columbia itself has been doing recently is heard in the set (MX-301, $3.50) of Wotan's Farewell and the Magic Fire Music from Wagner's "Die Walküre," well performed by Stokowski with the New York Philharmonic. But the poor recording Columbia did before can be heard in the dry, lusterless sound of Mitropoulos's tense performance with the Minneapolis Symphony of Weber's Jubilee Overture (12891-D, $1.25).

The lovely soprano voice of Isobel Baillie is heard in several arias which she recorded with different English orchestras and conductors and apparently in different places (MM-780, $6). Two of the arias are the beautiful With Verdure Clad from Haydn's "The Creation" and Art Thou Troubled? from Handel's "Rodelinda"; the others are Let the Bright Seraphim from Handel's "Samson," Sheep May Safely Graze from Bach's Cantata No. 208, and My Heart Ever Faithful from his Cantata No. 68—which I care less for.

Another lovely soprano voice, that of Elisabeth Schwarzkopf, which produced exquisitely pure and silvery tones effortlessly in the Columbia recording of Brahms's Requiem, is shriekily tremolo-ridden in the aria *Mi tradi* and its recitative from Mozart's "Don Giovanni," with the Philharmonia Orchestra under Krips (72640, $1.25). On the other hand Elisabeth Höngen uses a fine mezzo-soprano voice well in Schumann's "Die Kartenlegerin" and Wolf's "Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt"—the first a delightfully amusing song when one understands the words and they are acted by a Lotte Lehmann, the second an effective example of the kind of Wolf song in which the music merely underlines the meaning of the text (17558-D, $1).

Oscar Natzke, bass, sings Sarastro's two arias from Mozart's "The Magic Flute" sonorously in English with the Covent Garden Orchestra under Rankl (72641-D, $1.25). And Luigi Infantino, in *Questa o quella* and *La donna è mobile* from Verdi's "Rigoletto," uses a good tenor voice more straightforwardly than he did at New York's City Center, but with some exhibitionistic interpolations, and a concluding scream in the second piece (17557-D, $1).

The Record Collectors Society, 56 Raymond Avenue, Poughkeepsie, N. Y., asks me to inform readers of this column that it is attempting to organize chamber-music lovers in order to secure the reissue of good recordings that are no longer available.

Coming Soon in *The Nation*
"The Fall of Mussolini"
Reviewed by Paolo Milano

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Letters to the Editors

A Message from Israel to Downing Street

Dear Sirs: I was much moved by J. A. del Vayo's Open Letter to British Labor published in your issue of July 24. I am not a leader or any prominent personality, simply a member of a cooperative settlement in Israel, now on a short mission to the United States. The following open letter expresses the feelings of all labor in Israel. There is no necessity for surprise at the similarity of words and phrases between my letter and Mr. del Vayo's. It is a direct result of coinciding conditions, under which both the Spanish and Jewish people are victims of the same policy:

OPEN LETTER TO THE BRITISH LABOR PARTY

Dear Comrades: For more than thirty years Palestine was under British rule. The history of these years was a history of incessant struggle for the fulfilment of the pledges made to us in the Balfour Declaration and of the obligations toward us included in the mandate of the League of Nations. All that we have done in Palestine since then was not only without the help of Britain but in spite of Britain. Through all those years until 1945 you stood at our side in our struggle. In all your platforms, including the one before the last election, you pledged support to the Zionist cause, you praised our work in Palestine very highly, you promised to help build the Jewish National Home, you promised abolition of all restrictive laws on immigration and colonization. In all parliamentary debates on the Palestine question you criticized, very vigorously and sharply, the anti-Zionist policy of the Conservative government; your leaders, in their eloquent and brilliant speeches, presented the most powerful arguments for our cause. We, moreover, the labor movement in Palestine, being in a country within the British sphere, felt ourselves almost a part of your Labor Party. You always sent cables of greetings and letters of encouragement to all our conventions and conferences. Exchange of delegates and representatives between your party and ours was a matter of routine and a sign of cordial relations. I remember, on the occasions when your leaders visited our communal settlements and the great institutions of our Histadrut (the General Federation of Labor), the admiration they expressed, in speeches and letters, for all our work. More than once, in public statements and personal conversations, you claimed that, once elected, you would further the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. We were friends, good friends, members of one great movement striving for democracy, progress, socialism.

In 1945, when the elections in Britain took place, the excitement among us was as great as if they were our elections. We, the labor movement and all advanced factions in the Zionist movement, crossed our fingers and prayed for your victory. We have always known that the fate of Zionism as a progressive movement is inextricably bound up with that of progress all over the world; that victory for reaction is defeat for us. We trusted your promises and pledges. We relied on your friendship.

Three years have passed since you came to power. These three years were the darkest, the most horrible period we have ever had under British rule. Things that Baldwin, Chamberlain, and Churchill did not dare to do were done under the leadership of Attlee and Bevin. In these three years you have written some of the blackest pages in the long and tragic history of the Jewish people. You sent your troops to destroy the settlements you once praised so highly; to maltreat our women and children, all of workers' families, members of the pioneer movement who had pinned their hopes on you; to arrest thousands of our men, those men who fought shoulder to shoulder with you at El Alamein and Tobruk, in Italy and Germany, and whom you had praised for their exceptional courage. You sent your glorious navy to guard our coast against homeless refugees striving to reach their last friendly shore in the world. You dared to force some of these people back to the concentration camps in Germany. You created a new Buchenwald in Cyprus. You meditated on how effectively to destroy our organizations and institutions. The speeches of your leaders included ideas and phrases borrowed from Hitler's vocabulary.

You have failed in Palestine. You have become the most dire enemy of the Jews. And you have gained no sympathy among the Arabs, who still regard you as the embodiment of foreign oppression. You gave up the mandate, but your intrigues did not end with the departure of your last soldier. You instigated war.

We shall win this war, comrades, as you won the Battle of Britain in 1941.

Won't you save the dignity and honor of your democratic, Socialist Labor Party, before it is too late?

New York, October 1 A. M.

Unfounded Accusations?

Dear Sirs: In your issue of July 10 you carried a letter from Benjamin Harrow concerning the closing of the Horace Mann–Lincoln School of Teachers College. Mr. Harrow had a child in the school. His letter was typical of the insinuations and accusations made by certain parents over a period of years. These matters were given full and impartial examination by three courts. There was not a single accusation made by the parents which found support in court.

For example, Mr. Harrow insinuated that Teachers College had misused the funds granted it by the General Education Board. He asserted that now it would be possible to "merge the accumulated deficits of Teachers College with the endowment fund." In the trial of the case in the Supreme Court of the

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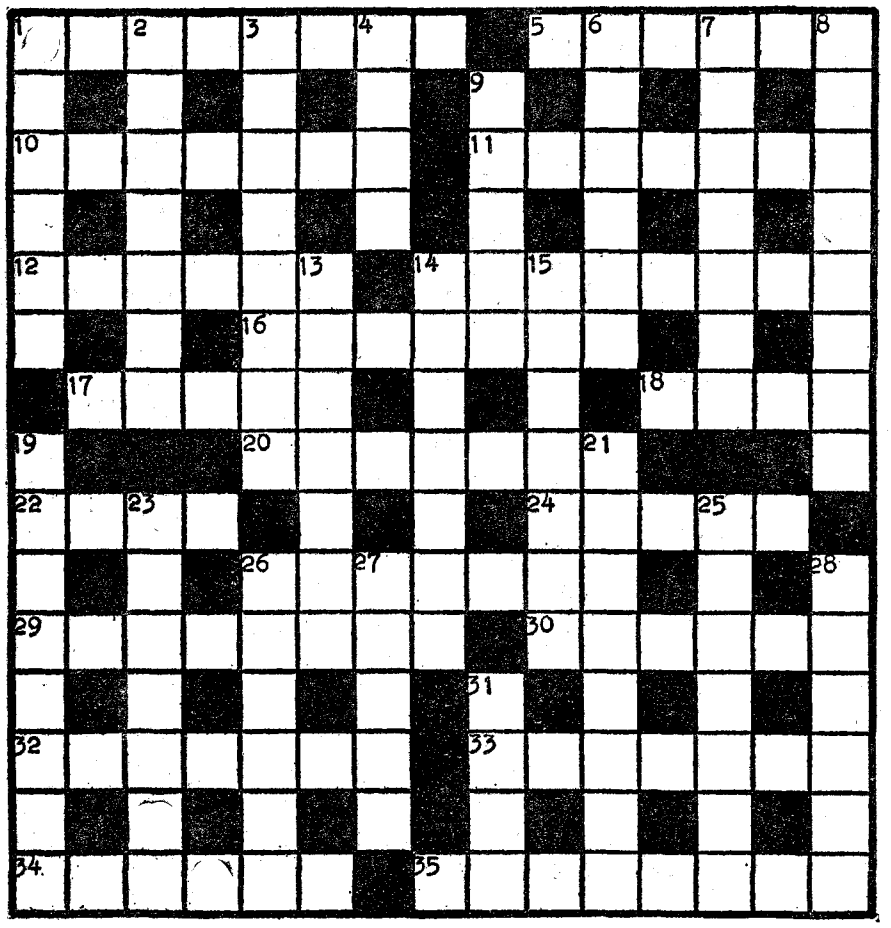
Crossword Puzzle No. 287

BY FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1 Do they riddle people? (The classic one did!) (8)
5 Got the place? (Some of Warsaw's heroes never lost it!) (6)
10 You might be so afraid, but those who take a bow usually take this too. (7)
11 The first Bourbon was of this. (7)
12 This seems smart to the French. (6)
14 Statesman for five hundred Palestinians? (8)
16 Whoever does this is inspiring, to say the least. (7)
17 and 18 Not last up out of a snowdrift. (5, 4)
20 There's no art in either the "grand" or the "petit" one. (7)
22 One shouldn't expect less of Sir Thomas! (4)
24 Look for this sort of panel in India. (5)
26 Here's a word ends with "def." (7)
29 They don't seem to mind being shut up. (8)
30 Massacre, not as changed as it might be. (6)
32. S. (7)
33 An air hero acquires polish. (7)
34 Rate. (6)
35 How the cart's overturned. (8)

DOWN

1 How arches should look. (6)
2 He knew most of the tricks of the trade. (7)
3 14 was, with Coningsby. (8)
4 Land where the lake rises. (4)
6 Hangs on the wing. (6)
7 Depot or mine. (7)
8 One who is, serves under a command. (8)
9 Pippa noted it on the thorn. (5)
13 Double in the books, but sometimes scratched from the start. (7)
14 Why the barrier must be eventually replaced? (7)
15 They go into the ring, but not for a long time. (7)
19 More frequently raised in damp climates. (8)
21 Ignorant. (8)
23 Good bookkeeping, but bad business if Columbia keeps them. (7)
25 One name for a crowfoot. (7)
26 Imprisonment. (6)
27 Alexander's was the Power of Music. (5)
28 A thousand of these would really belong to something, but they eventually go out. (6)
31 Briefly speaking, the state of my laundry? (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE No. 286

ACROSS:—1 COOPERATES; 6 MASH; 10 REVERIE; 11 PUNSTER; 12 and 13 IGOR STRAVINSKY; 15 ABSCOND; 16 ETAGERE; 17 NAIVETE; 20 ATHLETE; 22 MAGNA CARTA; 23 BEAN; 25 ELECTRA; 26 INERTIA; 27 SUSA; 28 DEBENTURES.

DOWN:—1 CARDINAL NUMBERS; 2 OBVIOUS; 3 ERRS; 4 ALERTED; 5 EXPIATE; 7 ARTISTE; 8 HARDY; PERENNIALS; 9 ANTIPATHY; 14 COVENANTS; 18 INGRESS; 19 EMANATE; 20 ASTRIDE; 21 EJECTOR; 24 MELT.

Readers are invited to send for a free copy of Mr. Lewis's "ground rules" for these challenging brain-teasers. Address requests to Puzzle Dept., The Nation, 20 Vesey Street, New York 7, N. Y.

State of New York certified public accountants who had been given access to the financial records of the school testified at length. In connection with the foregoing and other accusations of maladministration Justice Botein stated: "Despite full opportunity to substantiate these charges of maladministration, there was a complete failure of direct or any other form of acceptable proof of indifferent or incompetent administration of the school by Teachers College."

It should be noted that Teachers College is not devoting the funds given by the General Education Board to the general operation of the college. They are being used to support the Institute of School Experimentation, which conducts experimentation through associated schools in various parts of the United States. It was judged by the administration and trustees of the college that a more valuable program of experimentation could be developed through this means than through operation of the Horace Mann–Lincoln School. It was this opinion which the court approved after hearing the evidence on the issue. Justice Botein stated: "The record indicates that extended, intelligent, and unprejudiced consideration was given by the plain-

NEXT WEEK

SPECIAL MUSIC SECTION

The Critic's Function
by Clive Bell

"The Musorgsky Reader: A Life of Musorgsky in Letters and Documents."
Reviewed by B. H. Haggin

"The Theory of Harmony," by Arnold Schoenberg.
Reviewed by Harold Brown

"Music and Criticism. A Symposium."
Reviewed by Henry David Aiken

"Handel," by Edward J. Dent.
"Brahms," by Ralph Hill.
Reviewed by R. H. Flint

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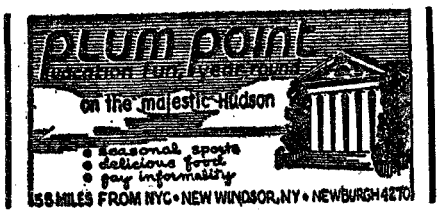
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tiff's Board of Trustees to the proposal that the operation of the school be discontinued, and that a comprehensive study was conducted of the program, achievements, and potentialities of the institute. I conclude, therefore, that the plaintiff was warranted in its conclusion that the school 'is no longer an effective instrument for experimentation' and that the institute bids fair to become a productive medium for the experimentation contemplated by the General Education Board in making the grants."

H. L. CASWELL, Associate Dean,
Teachers College

New York, October 28

Collecting Quotes

Dear Sirs: We are compiling a dictionary of quotations for Doubleday and Company. May we invite your readers to collaborate with us by sending in quotations, familiar and unfamiliar, old and new, from any source whatever? Although we cannot, of course, use everything sent to us, we shall give every item careful consideration. Doubleday's address is 14 West Forty-ninth Street.

WALLACE BROCKWAY
BART WEINER

New York, October 19

CONTRIBUTORS

ANTHONY BOWER has recently succeeded James Agee as *The Nation's* film critic.

C. HARTLEY GRATTAN is the author of "Introducing Australia" and "The Deadly Parallel."

GEORGE SOULE is the author of "America's Stake in Britain's Future" and other books. The most recent is "Introduction to Economic Science."

MARK BURGUNKER is a free-lance writer in the field of geology and geophysics.

RALPH LINTON has written and edited several books in the field of anthropology. He is a member of the staff of the Institute of Human Relations at Yale University.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES, whose poetry and criticism are well known to *Nation* readers, will conduct the Verse Chronicle from now on. Randall Jarrell, who wrote the Chronicle for a year or more, is at present at work on a critical biography of Hart Crane.

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The Christmas Book issue of December 6 will bring you up to date on the season's new books, giving particular attention to problems of contemporary history. Samuel Grafton, Harold Laski, Richard Hofstadter, John Farrelly and Malcolm Cowley, will be among the contributors.

Hollywood Issue

Look in January for the special Hollywood issue which will cover the political, cultural and economic aspects of the film industry and present comprehensive studies of distribution problems, technical advances and foreign films. Contributors will include Helen Gahagan Douglas, Kenneth MacGowan, Robert Joseph, Lewis Milestone.

In addition to *features,* read in every issue TRB's famous Washington Wire which an Illinois subscriber calls *"the best single, all-around, continuous job of reporting 'significant' news coming out of Washington"*—the exciting paragraphs of exclusive national news gathered by the most extensive reporting system ever organized by a liberal magazine—the illuminating departments on *Radio* by Saul Carson, *Movies* by Robert Hatch, *Theatre* by Harold Clurman, *Music* and the *Dance* by Cecil Smith.

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